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ADVENTURES AMIDST
EQUATORIAL FORESTS
AND RIVERS.



VILLIERS STUART


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ADVENTURES AMIDST
THE
EQUATORIAL FORESTS AND RIVERS
OF SOUTH AMERICA;

ALSO IN THE
WEST INDIES AND THE WILDS OF FLORIDA.

TO WHICH IS ADDED
"JAMAICA REVISITED."

By VILLIERS STUART, OF DROMANA,
AUTHOR OF "EGYPT AFTER THE WAR," "NILE GLEANINGS," ETC.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS.

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TO

THEIR EXCELLENCIES

SIR HENRY AND LADY BLAKE,

THIS VOLUME

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PREFACE.

THE narrative which I venture to submit to the public is chiefly compiled from letters and journals written at the time and on the spot.

It relates to countries, some of which have been partially described before, but it has been my fortune to visit remote and little-known portions of them, encountering odd, original people, and taking part in adventures and incidents which I trust may not be found devoid of interest.

The illustrations are partly from outline sketches of my own, partly from careful notes and descriptions worked up by a gifted and artistic young friend of mine, Mr. W. Whitelock Lloyd, who executed some of the marine pictures at the recent Naval Exhibition, and is beginning to attract notice.

The photo-lithographs of scenes in Jamaica are reproduced on a much reduced scale from the admirable series of large photographs furnished by Dr. Johnston, of Brownstown, Jamaica, of which I have availed myself by special permission generously accorded.

As regards the portion of this volume which deals with Jamaica, I may state that I first visited that

island in the same year that witnessed my South American adventures; but as I paid it a second visit last January I thought it best to postpone any description of it until I could combine my earliest with my latest impressions. These come last in point of time, and it therefore appeared most appropriate to place them last in the order of narrative; but I venture to request my readers to refer back to the introductory observations which follow before commencing the perusal of the concluding section of this work.

The Jamaica Exhibition, which formed an interesting incident in colonial progress, offered a suitable opportunity for calling attention to the present condition of the island, and to the important advance in material prosperity which it has achieved within the last quarter of a century.

It affords notable evidence of the vastness of the British Empire that so lovely a jewel in its crown as the island of Jamaica should be so little known to Englishmen as to pass almost unheeded in the catalogue of Imperial possessions. Yet I doubt whether such scenes of heavenly beauty are to be found in any other spot in their entire area. It is impossible to exaggerate its loveliness. The most skilful writers must despair of conveying any adequate idea of its fairy-like charms.

But its claims to notice do not stop here. It offers an admirable health resort to those who seek to escape the rigours of a northern winter. Its mountain ranges

rise to a height of between 7,000 and 8,000 feet, so that the invalid may choose his own climate. There are gardens of Eden amongst the hills, where it is always cool and temperate, and which are rendered easily accessible by excellent roads, which have been of late greatly extended and improved by the present able and energetic Governor, Sir Henry Blake.

It also presents an interesting illustration of the possibility of developing and improving the African race. I visited Jamaica about thirty years ago, and at that time found the coloured people in a semi-barbarous condition, lazy, insolent, and indifferent to all save the wants of the moment, caring not to better their condition or to arrive at any higher ideal than the beasts of the field—half naked on six days out of seven—rigged out in such finery as they could command on the seventh; in fact this last passion was the only incentive ever to do a day's work. Any ambition is better than none at all, and the desire to earn Sunday broadcloth for themselves and earrings and bracelets for their wives rendered some effort and exertion necessary, and redeemed them from absolute idleness.

All this is changed now. I came out here for the opening of the Jamaica Exhibition, and have been astonished at the contrast presented by the existing condition and character of the coloured population as compared with that which I remembered on the occasion of my first visit.

One is met on all sides by evidences of industry and improvement. The peasantry are now neatly and well dressed, and remarkably courteous and obliging. They all seem to aim at raising themselves in the world and attaining a better position. An eagerness to turn an honest penny whenever they can has taken the place of the former helplessness and indifference. The women may be met by the score on their way to market, carrying, balanced on their heads, up hill and down dale, often their own weight of bananas or other agricultural products. They will march fifteen or twenty miles for the chance of trading away these goods for a few shillings, and they are so merry and good-humoured withal; they always have a word of greeting for the casual tourist—"Good morning, massa," or whatever it may be, smiling the while and showing a set of ivories that would drive a dentist to despair. On Sunday they form model congregations. They have musical voices and sing well; their children attend school regularly.

They have also become exceedingly loyal. I doubt whether in any part of Her Majesty's dominions the enthusiasm with which Prince George of Wales was welcomed on his landing last January could have been exceeded, or the manifestations of attachment to the Queen surpassed.

The visit of H.R.H. was for the purpose of opening the Exhibition, the importance attached to which by the Jamaicans is indicated by the fact that upwards of

1100 of the inhabitants joined in the guarantee fund, subscribers sending in their names from every district of the island. The Exhibition building was exceedingly handsome and most creditable to the good taste, public spirit and enterprise of the Colony. The architecture was Moorish.

The Governor, Sir Henry Blake, in his opening address to the Legislative Council said : " His Royal Highness was deeply impressed by the beauty, the extent and the value of the Exhibition, and equally so by the loyal enthusiasm with which he was greeted in the splendid reception given to the grandson of the Queen by the people of Jamaica. It would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of the Exhibition to Jamaica. Carried out as this great work has been by the hearty co-operation of every class of the community, it has demonstrated how much can be done when all work together for the common good ; it has stimulated intellectual activity among the people, and has brought Jamaica with her possibilities and attractions before the world with a prominence unequalled during the present century. The consequence is to be seen in the keen competition for her trade, and there are already indications that the close of the Exhibition will find the island endowed with more than one valuable industry hitherto undeveloped, while markets will be found for products till now neglected. Nor will the benefit be confined to Jamaica, for the products of the Bahamas, Barbadoes, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Turk's Islands are exhibited in their

respective courts, and are being noted by observant eyes."

The result fully bore out his Excellency's anticipation. Large numbers of the coloured population from all parts of the island attended, and the educational effect in enlightening their minds and enlarging their ideas must have been excellent.

Before its close upwards of 300,000 individuals had passed the turnstiles. It may be useful here to state that the population of the island is about 650,000; its area is upwards of 4,000 square miles or 2,500,000 acres; its circuit 400 miles. Its exports, according to the last returns, were valued at £1,614,824. Its imports at £1,597,600. The chief articles exported consisted of coffee, sugar, bananas and other fruit, dye-woods, annatto, cocoa-nuts, rum, pimento, cattle and horses; also fibre plants (for which the island is eminently fitted), ginger and many minor products. In 1888-89, dye-woods formed 25 per cent. of the exports; bananas and other fruit 20 per cent., coffee 19 per cent., sugar 16 per cent.

The banana trade is rapidly increasing, the demand being inexhaustible. This product has become a great favourite as a food with the working classes in the United States, who find it a very sustaining as well as a palatable, agreeable and convenient article of diet. The miners of Colorado are specially fond of it. In 1888-89 1,417,282 bunches were exported; many bunches contain 100 bananas.

Of course all these staple products, together with the processes of preparation, were amply illustrated at the Exhibition, and formed a most interesting and instructive feature of it.

The coloured visitors took an intelligent interest in the contents of the various courts, though I fear the band and the steam merry-go-round had the best of it in the race for popularity by day, and the illuminations and fireworks by night. But is it otherwise at South Kensington? The Governor has promoted the Industrial School movement, an encouraging beginning has been made, and the little Africans who attend are quite competent to profit by them. They make good carpenters, and are quick to learn.

The popular idea of Jamaica is of an island ruined by the Emancipation, a region of derelict estates with a scattered population of negro squatters paying no rent, living in squalid huts, supporting life on yams and bananas, and indebted to the calabash tree for their only household utensils. This idea was true once, but the realities of native Jamaican life are far different now.

There are many thriving and prosperous estates owned by planters, some of whom are resident, manage their estates themselves, and form an influential element in Jamaican society; others leave the work to agents, and content themselves with an annual visit.

There are sugar estates in the lowlands, and coffee

and cocoa estates in the highlands, which return a handsome income to their possessors; there are extensive grass lands on which cattle and horses are raised, the latter so good as to have attracted the attention of military authorities as suitable for troopers.

The agricultural population consists chiefly of small cultivators, who pay an average rent of one pound sterling per acre for their holdings, live in neat cottages built of wattles and thatched with palm leaves, cultivate bananas, yams, bread-fruit, sugar, coffee, cocoa, ginger, arrowroot, ground nuts, cocoa-nut palms, and other tropical products, such as custard apples, star apples, oranges, pine-apples, mangoes, and a variety of fruits the names of which would convey no meaning to those who have never had the privilege of visiting the West Indies.

The coloured population are well dressed, and gave me the idea of being the merriest and happiest peasantry I had met with in any part of the world.

The varied produce is brought by the women for sale to the nearest town. At every centre of population there is an excellent market hall, airy, open and cool, beneath the shade of which growers and consumers meet and bargain. The wife has tramped on foot for miles under a hot sun, loaded as above described; the husband has ridden to market comfortably on the family donkey, beneath the shade of a cotton umbrella, the only article he has carried.

In my various expeditions through the island I was much struck by the intelligence of the negro drivers; they gave me much information, and were all unanimous in praising the present Governor, and detailing the improvement in roads and everything else due to his energy and conscientious devotion to his duties.

H. VILLIERS STUART, OF DROMANA.

November, 1891.



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ADVENTURES AMIDST
THE
EQUATORIAL FORESTS AND RIVERS
OF SOUTH AMERICA;

ALSO IN
THE WEST INDIES AND THE WILDS OF FLORIDA.

CHAPTER I.

SURINAM.

VOYAGE FROM DEMERARA TO DUTCH GUIANA.—THE NICARIE
RIVER.—FRENCH CONVICTS.—THE SURINAM RIVER.—
PARAMARIBO.—VULTURES.—THE MARKET PLACE.

WISHING to explore the great equatorial forest in the interior of Guiana, and to reach the watershed which separates it from the valley of the Amazon, I embarked in November, 1858, at Demerara for Paramaribo, the capital of Surinam. There were twenty other passengers, all Dutch. Unluckily for us, both the mail steamers were under repair, and we had to make the trip in a small river boat. She plunged about in the ocean swell as if she were bent on committing suicide; my fellow travellers were soon *hors de combat*, and the floor of her little saloon was paved with ladies, babies, and basins; there were no berths nor any other sleeping accommodation except the floor. In the midst of this scene of woe the cabin table was arranged for dinner

by the steward, a raw Dutch lad with yellow hair and broad beam, who had much difficulty in laying the cloth. In doing so he trod on some of the unfortunate "vraus" and "vrauleins," who I must say bore their sufferings with greater fortitude than the French and Spanish ladies whom I had seen under similar adversities. The dinner consisted of soup, in which every element of soup had been omitted except the grease, and two starved chickens whose legs stuck out rigidly as if they had died from the effects of strychnine. These delicacies our worthy skipper dispensed to the fair occupants on the floor through the medium of the steward, whose width of base stood him in good stead in the violent pitching and rolling which prevailed; nothing else saved the lad from plunging head foremost amongst the bevy of beauties (Dutch, creole and mulatto) that adorned the carpet. I had descended only to reconnoitre, and soon made my escape to the deck with a biscuit and a piece of Dutch cheese. Every mattress was occupied, but I triumphantly drew forth from my portmanteau the air-bed which I had brought with me, and inflated it to the great astonishment of the black steersman, who became so absorbed in contemplation that he forgot the helm, and the little craft began yawing about in the trough of the sea more furiously than ever. Curiosity is a weakness of his race.

His duties were manifold, for when we approached shallow water he would leave the wheel, run to take soundings, and then skurry back again, and begin working it frantically. I did not obtain as good a night's rest as I expected. I had placed the aforesaid air-bed on deck, and every sailor as he passed stopped to punch it, causing one to dream of sub-marine earth-

quakes. I was awoke for the last time at daybreak by a final paroxysm of punching, and found two good-looking mulatto women pushing and squeezing away at my mattress, their tongues going in Dutch at the rate of twenty miles an hour. I immediately jumped up and offered to let them try whether it was comfortable; they giggled, displayed two very white sets of ivories, and would evidently have liked of all things to take me at my word, but after a little hesitation they came to the conclusion that it would not be quite the thing, and declined.

Soon afterwards we entered the Nicarie river, up which lies the first Dutch frontier settlement. The channel is very narrow, and dense forest comes down to the water's edge, while mangrove thickets invade the sea itself and form an impassable fringe along the shore and river bank. At its mouth a little Dutch war-sloop is anchored, with her guns ready to blow to pieces anything attempting to pass between her and the mangroves without her commander's consent.

The settlement, which consists of a few wooden houses and a church, is closely besieged by the forest, but higher up the river occur coffee, cane, and cotton plantations, which create some trade for the little port. I saw here for the first time a very thick hard nut the kernel of which tastes like the sweetest fresh butter; the milk tree is also indigenous. At the time of my visit the value of this last was not fully understood, but recently it has been discovered that not only does its sap abound in caoutchouc, but that the article manufactured from it possesses peculiarities which impart to it special virtues. I may here mention that a variety of trees and vines in the equatorial forest produce india-

rubber and gutta-percha. Amongst these are the bush ropes or lianes which form such a characteristic feature of the vegetation of these latitudes. The Governor, to whom I was introduced, told me that far up the river lived wild negroes without whose permission no boat could pass.

We took on board six French convicts, who had escaped from Cayenne in a canoe, and had lived in the bush some weeks before they were finally captured. A more repulsive, wicked, reckless-looking half-dozen I never saw. They were attired in prison dresses of coarse sackcloth, and had dirty cotton handkerchiefs fastened round their close-cropped heads. They were escorted by six Dutch soldiers and a corporal; the latter wore a very handsome order, the highest military decoration which the Dutch Government has to bestow. It is their Victoria Cross, and carries with it the title of knight. The corporal had earned it on the coast of Celebes island. A nest of pirates occupied a rock from which they kept up a destructive fire upon the corvette sent to capture them. The heroic soldier offered to scale this stronghold if five others would accompany him, and he succeeded with his little band in dislodging the robbers, killing many of them, and driving the survivors into the clutches of the main attacking party. The Government would have rewarded him with his commission, but the poor fellow could not read or write, which was a fatal bar to his promotion; it was impracticable even to make him a sergeant. The prisoners beguiled the time in chewing tobacco, eating salt fish and coarse bread, and in sleeping, to all outward appearances quite indifferent to their somewhat clouded prospects.

We reached the mouth of the Surinam river twenty hours later, and the outlaws were the only passengers who seemed sorry that the trip was approaching its termination.

The Surinam forests are the grandest I have yet seen; trees of noble stature actually overhang the salt water, a little way back immense buttress trees extend their great cedar-like branches above the lesser growth, and from those huge arms droop tangled masses of vegetable cordage which descend till they are lost amongst the under-growth of minor bush; these details I discerned by the aid of an excellent telescope which the Captain lent me. Vegetation goes on with such formidable energy here that if land be neglected for six months it is covered with a dense growth of shrubs and saplings, and in two years impenetrable bush hides all trace of human occupation. Neatly laid out plantations sloping to the water's edge occur all the way up the river to Paramaribo, and greetings were interchanged as we passed between the passengers on board and the Dutch lairds who were smoking their pipes beneath their pretty verandahs. Each plantation appears as a square clearing, covered with bright green sugar-cane, tall forest trees standing sentry all round. The planter's house is usually situated near the river, with a long low sugar-boiling factory and its tall chimney close by; not far off, too, are the cottages and provision grounds of the slaves, but evil days are in store for these patriarchal little Utopias. Emancipation is close at hand, and then the forest will claim its own again, and Mynheer's pipe will no more send up its incense from those Arcadian bowers, till abundant immigration shall have supplied the labour market anew.

The country is quite flat, though its level is rather higher than that of Demerara. We steamed along the coast the whole way from Georgetown, three hundred miles; it is all low, and covered with forest. The climate is the most equable in the world. Since I have been in these latitudes the temperature has never varied from 80° — 85° , day or night, by sea or land. It would be the paradise of consumptive patients.

We passed Fort Amsterdam and the confluence of the Commerwine with the Surinam, and soon afterwards a turn in the river disclosed Paramaribo, with its shipping, its painted houses and pretty gardens, and its stately palm and tamarind avenues. There lay at anchor a gunboat, two mail steamers, and several Dutch, English, and American ships. The scene was further diversified by canoes, and queer-looking country barges thatched with palm leaves.

On arrival at the wharf, custom-house officers came on board, and civilly passed my luggage without examination.

When casting my eye over the map of South America I had often looked with curiosity at Dutch Guiana, and wondered what sort of a place it might be which was so near the equator, and yet inhabited by natives of damp, foggy Holland. What form would Hollandism assume when transplanted to the torrid zone? I little imagined that I should one day have an opportunity of judging for myself, but here I was in the heart of that remote little known colony, and felt agreeably surprised to find it a very pleasant abode. I met with much civility from all the Dutchmen with whom I came in contact. They retained their characteristics unimpaired. Everything is neat, clean, and orderly; the streets carefully

swept and strewn with sand and shells ; the houses newly painted outside, trim and tidy within ; the thoroughfares lined with beautiful avenues of trees ; the gardens adorned with lovely flowers and sedulously weeded. All business is conducted with clockwork punctuality, especially the business of dinner, for Mynheer has lost none of the gastronomic prowess of his ancestors. The Paramaribo citizen is proud of Holland, but he is prouder still of Paramaribo ! He is constantly exacting admiration for his town. One wooden house after another is pointed out as an architectural triumph : the barracks, the public offices, the clubs and churches are all displayed as chefs-d'œuvre. The Paramaribean is very courteous. It is the custom here to raise the hat to all strangers. On landing several passers-by offered me their hands, and bade me welcome to their town ; they introduced me to the club, invited me to their houses, and gave all the information in their power.

This is very different from the neighbouring colony of Demerara, where the inhabitants unite with one accord in abusing the country and everything connected with it, and whose only aim is to coin dollars as fast as possible, and get back to Europe.

Conspicuous citizens of Paramaribo are the black-hooded vultures, which stalk about in the streets and fraternize with ducks, poultry, and naked children, promenade amongst the market baskets, and line the river banks and house-tops. There is a fine of 200 dollars for shooting one of these birds, a fact which appears to be well-known to them. I have seen fifty together under the tamarind avenues, where the marketing goes on. The aspect of the market place is varied by whimsical looking little girls of various

shades of colour, with strings of coral wound several times round their middles,—and nothing else in the way of toilet except tufts of plaited wool which stick out from their heads at every possible angle, giving them the appearance of little Medusas. Another feature is the midday siesta, which is a sacred institution, everyone taking to their hammocks at noon, and the stillness of midnight prevails in the town until 4 P.M.

Any one arriving at Paramaribo within those hours would suppose it to be a deserted city, the inhabitants of which had been laid under a spell by the wand of some enchanter.

CHAPTER II.

SURINAM—*continued.*

START FOR THE INTERIOR.—ARAWAK INDIANS.—BUSH NEGROES.—COCOA-NUT MILK AS A BEVERAGE.—GRANDEUR OF THE SURINAM FORESTS.—TREE-LILIES.—SETTLERS' HOUSES.—INFLATING THE AIR-BED.—LICENCE ALLOWED TO SLAVES.—A FOREST BUNGALOW.—MY INDIAN ESCORT.—TROPICAL INSECTS AND BIRDS.

AFTER a few days' sojourn at Paramaribo I engaged a boat manned by slaves, and started for the interior.

I had selected the Surinam for my attempt to reach the watershed of the Amazon basin, because it takes its rise in that section of the dividing ridge which approaches further northwards than any other in its entire extent.

The sources of the Surinam were at that time unsurveyed, and are even now, I believe, but imperfectly traced.

My crew consisted of six negroes and a steersman. Their laziness exceeded anything that an Englishman can imagine, prior to experience. While rowing they keep up a languid chant, not unlike cats upon the house-top, the strokes of the oar occurring in the course of this performance as a sort of surprise at the end of each verse. These efforts, few and far between, are constantly interrupted by noisy disputes and by attempts to stop the boat for the day at every

plantation reached. To listen to them one would suppose that they were just expiring of fatigue. They groan, they catch crabs, they roll about on the thwarts, and in the midst of these proceedings the tide turns, and they have not reached half way to the point where they are to spend the night; then they drop their oars and declare they will work no more, but will go back to the last plantation. At this crisis the angry Briton emerges from his den—a cabin composed of palm stems. He arraigns them in energetic language; then when they find he does not mean to be trifled with, they proceed to show what those brawny arms and deep chests can do. It is an English axiom that a man is nothing without his breeches, but these sons of Ham think otherwise. When they mean to work in earnest, the first thing they do is to take off that garment; they divest themselves of every vestige of clothing, and begin pulling at the oars like madmen, and yelling like fiends, and urge the heavy boat against a strong current at a respectable rate for hours together. One quarter of these exertions would have sufficed while the tide was running up, but that is not their way. Negroes seem incapable of looking forward, or indeed of remembering. To-day's experience will be lost upon them on the morrow, and the same scene will be enacted time after time.

As I looked upon those naked men and watched them yelling and gesticulating, it occurred to me how little their intercourse with the white man had done for them, and how unchanged their wild African natures remained after a continued residence for generations amidst civilization. They have been carefully instructed in Christianity, but they still dance round the Cancan tree

and worship Obeah. Their sole and only idea of liberty is to work no more for ever, but to roast plantains, and sleep in the sun the livelong day.

Soon after leaving Paramaribo we were engulfed in the depths of the great South American forest, and the only human beings we met upon the river were an occasional party of Indians in their canoes. The tribe hereabouts is the Arawak; they have long black hair and Tartar features, with enormous mouths. They are always accompanied by a couple of cur dogs with sharp ears and curly tails. These are very useful for finding game in the depths of the forest, and also in pointing tortoises, which are a common article of food and barter here; and excellent they are. I was several times indebted to them for a savoury stew. The Indians wear no clothes, but their necks, arms and waists are adorned with strings of beads. They are fine powerfully built men, and bear a good character, being peaceable and honest. They live in huts made of bamboo and palm leaves; in these they sling their hammocks, and hang up their bows, arrows, and fish spears, as also their blow-pipes. The famous wourali-poison, with which the arrows are tipped, is kept suspended from the roof in a neat little basket. They clear a small patch of forest by burning the bark of the trees, and planting cassava amongst the ashes. They subsist upon this crop, and the proceeds of their hunting and fishing excursions. The root of the cassava resembles a horse-radish. It is first mashed, and the juice being poisonous, it is absolutely necessary to separate it from the farina, which is the valuable part of the plant. For this purpose the pulp is pressed into a cylinder of woven cane-work, strong and very elastic. It is about

six feet long, with a stout loop at each end. When this receptacle is full, it is hung up to the beam of the hut; the Indian's wife runs a stick through the lower loop, upon which she sits astride; the effect is to squeeze the contents of the cylinder and cause the objectionable sap to exude. Happy is the Indian who has a heavy help-mate! When separated from the juice the farina is spread to dry in the sun, and made into thin wafer-like cakes, which are very nourishing and form a good substitute for bread.

Besides the Indians one meets bush-negroes. These are the descendants of runaway slaves, who have established themselves far up the river, and are perfectly wild and savage. The Government recognise them as free and independent, and have made a treaty defining the limits of their territory, and securing to them certain rights. They wear no clothes, speak a dialect of their own, live in the same manner as the Indians, and are considerably blacker than domesticated negroes. They come down to Paramaribo with tortoises, deer, and curassow birds (a fowl about as large as a turkey, with glossy black plumage and a yellow beak), bringing back a return cargo of spirits, tobacco, and fish-hooks. In spite of the efforts of missionaries they have relapsed into heathenism. The domesticated negroes are extremely afraid of them, the consequence of which to myself I shall have occasion to narrate further on.

Soon after starting, I found that drinkable water would be a difficulty during the expedition, for the river was so polluted with vegetable matter that it offered anything but a pleasant diluent. A considerable contingent is furnished by the drainage from the forest. Fearing fever, I determined to consume as

little of it as possible, and as a substitute I instructed my crew to collect cocoa-nuts whenever the opportunity presented itself, and their milk formed my principal beverage; fortunately, plenty of these invaluable palms occurred throughout our trip.

A planter told me that he had sunk a well in the hope of procuring pure spring water; he excavated to a depth of seventy-five feet, but finding that the soil continued to consist of sticks, leaves, and silt, he gave it up, concluding that water percolating through such material could not be any improvement on that furnished by the river. But I deduced another conclusion, viz., that the Guiana coast had been slowly sinking, for it is manifest that the vegetable matter now seventy-five feet deep had once been on the surface.

No description can convey any idea of the grandeur of the Equatorial forests, or of the loveliness of its flora. It must be remembered that there is as great a difference between the equatorial vegetation and the tropical forests a few degrees north or south of the line, as there is between the latter and European woodland scenery. The region which I was traversing was about four degrees north of the equator. The forests are similar to those in Central Africa; indeed, the equatorial forest is much alike all round the world. In its depths there exists the same gloom which Stanley dwells on as so oppressive. The dense canopy of foliage, expanded something like a hundred feet overhead, lets comparatively little daylight through. Except in accidental open spaces the sun never penetrates; the atmosphere is steamy with warm vapour, and the occurrence of marshy ground under foot frequent.

The parallelism with Stanley's forest is completed by the fact of those of the Surinam being also tenanted by wild African negroes as already stated.

The outline is varied and broken in every possible way, as shown in the annexed illustration.

The banks of the Surinam are lined with arborescent lilies, bearing a large white flower resembling the lily of the Nile. They are probably members of the Arum family. The stems are thick and woody, and standing as close as they can be packed, they present an impenetrable barrier between the river and the shore. From the branches which wave over these, hang down festoons of flowers, red, yellow, blue, and rose-coloured; bright-plumaged birds fly to and fro, and a multitude of cries and sounds issue forth from the interior. In the thick cover behind are panthers (black and spotted), ant-bears, jaguars, wild boars, deer, curassow birds, boa constrictors, apes, monkeys, and tapirs. The curassow birds are excellent eating, the flesh not unlike turkey.

Terra firma cannot be reached from the river except at points where the Indians have cut a lane through the tree-lilies. If one wishes to land at any other point one must carve one's way to shore foot by foot. In the forest itself the Indians have made paths in different directions along which they hunt. These are also utilized by jaguars and other wild beasts, and it would not be safe to traverse them unarmed. Luckily the beasts of prey sleep during the day; in fact there seems to be a sort of "Box and Cox" arrangement between them and the human denizens of the forest—the one set of lodgers promenading by day and the other by night.

During the first part of our expedition up the river, plantations occurred at intervals, growing however

fewer and farther between as we advanced into the interior. On reaching a settler's house about sundown the traveller takes up his quarters there as a matter of course; in fact, if he attempted to pass on without visiting the owner, the latter would come to the river side and press him to stay. The usual course towards evening was to moor our boat at one of these plantations; the crew formed a procession, each member carrying some one article on his head—no individual would burthen himself with more than a single object. Perhaps the first would carry a big trunk balanced on his woolly pate, while the load of the next was limited to a tobacco pipe! On arriving at the house a slave would bring slippers and a glass of grog or sangaree.

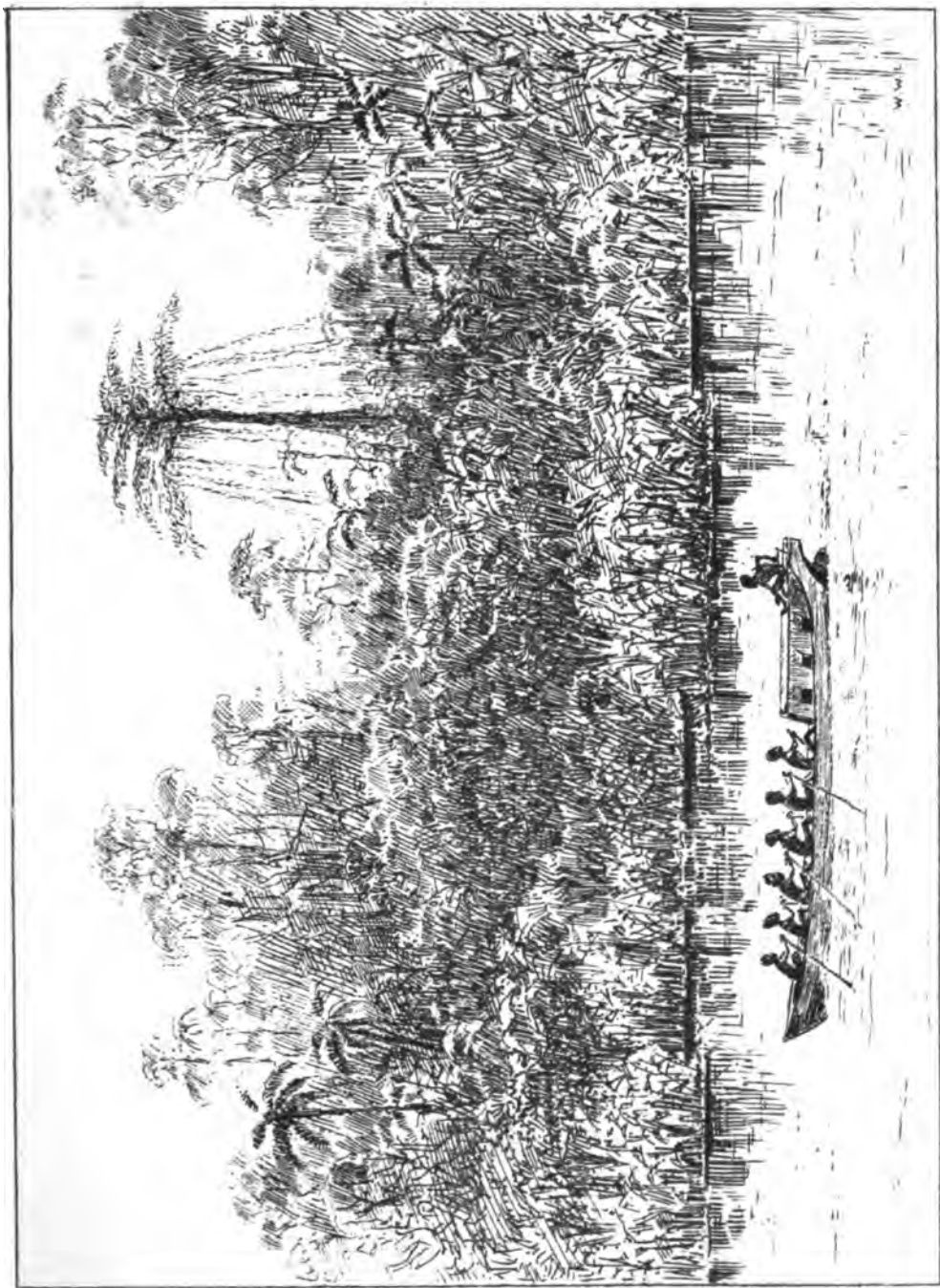
After a short interval of conversation the owner conducted me to my room, generally a large empty chamber, with no furniture beyond a couple of wooden chairs. The crew deposited all my goods and chattels and arranged them on the floor. Then followed the process of inflating the air-bed which I carried with me, an unfailing object of lively curiosity, which attracted all the slaves in the establishment, great and small, male and female, yellow, brown, and black. They stood staring at the process with their mouths wide open, while the functionary whose business it was to work the bellows was regarded by them quite as an enchanter. The negro to whom this office had been allotted swaggered much, marching about consequentially on the strength of it. As the room contained no wash-stand or accessories, a couple of slave girls in the scantiest drapery entered bearing a brass basin and jug. One of them became temporarily an animated

wash-stand, the other a towel-horse, while a third poured water over my hands; the three Graces in ebony, statuesque models for the sculptor, but embarrassing adjuncts to the toilet of a bashful man.

The supper consisted of cold fish, cold stewed tortoise, cheese, ham, and cassava bread. This meal ended, chairs were placed under the verandah, and conversation and cigars beguiled the time till bed hour. At seven in the morning came coffee, cassava bread, ham, Dutch cheese and Dutch butter; then a walk round the plantation, after which I started on my way up the river, many kind things being said and done, and some little delicacy put into the boat as a final viaticum.

The houses are of wood, and heavy beams cross the ceiling in the old Saxon style, unencumbered with plaster, the plank walls admitting the wind at every crevice. Glass shades protect the candles from being blown out. The slaves go to and fro as they please; staring at every proceeding of their master and mistress without rebuke. A far greater degree of licence is allowed to them than would be tolerated in the case of English servants. I have seen a jet-black urchin of eight years of age with his head on the floor and his heels in the lap of the lady of the house. The domestic slaves seemed to repair to the drawing-room whenever curiosity prompted them to ascertain what was going on there.

At one plantation our absent-minded host was always permitting the sacred fire on that altar of Vesta; his pipe, to expire, necessitating an attendant whose sole business was to keep a piece of charcoal aglow wherewith to restore the vital spark. At another place the slaves who attended us at table wore jackets



THE EQUATORIAL FOREST
MY FLOATING HOME

in honour of the stranger—but *no trowsers*. At another, the family livery consisted of a clean cotton handkerchief thrown over the shoulder, and tied in front of the throat.

I halted one night at the establishment of a fine old gentleman, a retired officer, who had been for many years in the Dutch navy, stationed at Java, Borneo and the Celebes Islands, of which places he had many yarns to tell, but now he has beaten his sword into a pruning-hook, and settled in the Surinam forests, where he amuses himself by cultivating the chief tropical productions.

In his prime he had married a Javanese princess who had been assigned an annuity by the Government in lieu of her hereditary power and privileges. His distinguished spouse still shared his fortunes but lived in the closest seclusion, only appearing when the Dutch Commissioners annually visited her, in order to verify her continued existence. On these occasions she received them glittering with diamonds, and entertained them with a banquet served on gold and silver plate.

My host while stationed at Surinam had fallen so much in love with the extreme richness and beauty of the South American forest that he gave up his profession and bought an unreclaimed tract on the Surinam river.

His residence consisted of two bungalows of timber roughly hewn in the neighbouring woods, and thatched with palm leaves. Wooden cleets had been nailed to the beams, from which at night the hammocks were slung. Along the walls hung Indian fish-spears, blow-pipes, bows, javelins, nets, rifles, and all the other implements

of a hunter's life. Jaguar skins and bear hides strewn the floor, and formed the ottomans on which we sat. The palm-leaf roof projected so as to form a low verandah surrounding the house, the columns which supported it were trunks of the Miritis palm ; they formed shafts, smooth, straight and round as the columns of a cathedral aisle.

The bungalows were situated on an eminence overlooking the river, one of those natural savannas which sometimes occur in tropical forests, nature having some mode or other of protecting them from the invasion of the formidable vegetation which girdles them. Long rich grass covered the ground, and a few orange, lemon, mango and other fruit trees dotted the hill-side. Under the shade of these stood the dairy cows, small skinny specimens of the Orinoco breed. The fences consisted of Allamanda bushes in full blossom.

Behind the bungalow was a garden in which my host cultivated various Javanese as well as native plants. There grew Mocha coffee, cloves, nutmegs, lemon grass for fevers, tobacco, the purple pineapple of Java, vanilla, cocoa-nut trees, arrowroot, cassava and a plant from the fibres of which this eccentric old sailor spun all the cordage and lines he required.

Below us flowed the broad yellow tide of the Surinam, its width rather exceeding that of the Thames at London Bridge. On the opposite side of the river, from amid the dense tangled mass of undercover, rose the tall grey stems of the virgin forest, and as far as ever the eye could reach, all was trees, trees, trees, and still trees.

The gallant captain himself was a splendid old fellow,

tall and strongly built. A very Nazarite, no razor had touched his chin or upper lip since he had adopted this strange wild home. A white beard flowed in luxuriant waves half way down his ample breast. What bear's grease or Macassar he had used I know not, but so dense was the shaggy growth that not more than one third of his bronzed visage was to be seen, his nose and a limited portion of territory around that feature appearing as a savanna amid the hairy jungle which girdled it; he had keen piercing grey eyes, his speech was slow and somewhat pompous. Between sixty and seventy summers, most of them tropical ones, had passed over his head, yet his upright vigorous frame betrayed no symptoms of decay. He looked as if born to be a king of men.

He had acquired great influence with the Arawak Indians, and on learning that I wished to explore the forest and add to my collection of plumage birds, he at once offered to arrange an expedition for me under the auspices of the redskins, a tribe of whom happened to be in the vicinity, so that there was nothing to prevent our starting next morning. The expedition promised to be full of interest, and I closed with his offer with cordial assent. I was up before daybreak eager for adventure.

Our breakfast consisted of coffee from the garden, milk, cassava bread, wild turkey and leg of peccari, both cold. My Havannah cigars formed our dessert, and were pronounced first rate by my host, although his home-grown tobacco was by no means to be despised. He apologized for not being able to accompany me, he was suffering from the effects of a recent attack of fever. He however sent his factotum instead; this was a

Dutch sailor who had served under the old hero and now shared his retirement. Both he and his patron spoke German, which was our medium of communication.

Near Mr. W.'s plantation there was a pretty little savanna close to the water side, serving for a landing-place. The party of Indians, five in number, whom he had engaged to escort me through the forest, were assembled here ; two of them, bending over a small fire, were toasting plantains, the smell of which resembled roast chestnuts ; the three others, regardless of alligators, were floundering about in the tepid flood—82° or 83°.

Not far from them were my negroes, lying on their backs in the delight of utter indolence, the great boat drawn up high and dry being indicative of a halt and no pulling for the day.

“Hi, hi, hi, Massa go shoot fowls, we sleep plenty dis day,” such was the text over which the ebony rogues grinned with delight and kicked their lazy heels. Mr. W. introduced me to my Indian escort, speaking to them in their own dialect. As I said before, he has considerable influence with the forest tribes hereabouts. I have no doubt whatever that they are identical in race with the redskins of North America, the difference of complexion being due to climate. They wear no clothes, but their ankles are decorated with anklets, below the knee is a leather ring, while long necklaces hang down to their middles. These necklaces consist of glass beads or of large seeds alternately red and black the size of ounce bullets. Except for these ornaments and their weapons, they stood as nature made them. Their straight black hair looked as if it had been cropped school-boy fashion

with the aid of a bowl. In manner they were grave, reserved, and very silent, a great contrast to the laughing, chattering, excitable negro. Each man held in his hand a bundle consisting of a blow-pipe eight feet long, a bow and several arrows. While on the tramp they carry these in their hands, but when about to shoot they lay down the surplus arrows on the ground, reserving one for use. They carry besides a quiver filled, not with Cupid's darts, but splinters of hard wood, slung from their shoulders by a cord made of twisted grass, as also a couple of little basket-work receptacles for the silk-cotton and poison. The bow and arrows are about five feet in length, the latter being as long as the former and winged with feathers; nearly four feet of the upper part of the arrow consists of a light reed or cane, the remaining portion consists of a shaft of hard heavy wood, the extremity pointed and fashioned in the shape of a lozenge and not like an ordinary arrow-head, one side being armed with barbs five in number, nicked out of the wood. The cane is hollow, and the hard-wood point I have described is inserted into the cavity, and tightly laced round with very fine whip-cord woven from grass. The Indians' whole stock of arrows seldom exceeds half-a-dozen, and they are very chary in the use of them, only discharging when they can make sure that there is a good chance of recovering their weapons.

Annexed is a sketch of my native escort. The fern beneath which they stand, as well as the remarkable plant to the left, were sketched by me on the spot; the former is reduced in proportion by one-third, for only thus could it be included within the limits of the plate.

The actual length of a single frond as measured by

myself was 19 feet. The figures are the work of a talented young friend of mine from description aided by a photograph. He has, however, omitted some of the ornaments, as also the quiver and basket, which should appear slung across the shoulder and hanging at the left side of each native.

Our escort, thus accoutred, strode before us along a well-worn track that led inland, grasping their javelins, blow-pipes, and snakewood bows in their hands, and having nothing on their heads to shield them from that fierce blazing sun, which had raised my thermometer on the preceding day to 140°. Besides the Arawaks and the Dutch overseer, I was accompanied by a negro who had constituted himself my valet, and was in hopes of persuading me to take him to England, where he heard all slaves were at once free; he carried a spare gun in case of need. We were within four degrees of the line. It was rather late when we started, and the sun was mounting fast overhead; so far inland too there was little wind, but our fiery ordeal did not last long.

At a distance of some hundred yards from the house the savanna terminated; first came a few outlying groups of fan palms, gru gru palms, and bamboos, then thinly scattered trees without much undercover, and then the deep shades of the forest, with its impenetrable canopy over head, and a dense tangled growth beneath. As we crossed the savanna, the equatorial sun beat down with frightful power, we had no protection against it but our Panama hats, and we were right glad to plunge into the cool depths of the forest, and take shelter from the dazzling flood of light in which everything was bathed.

As we advanced I saw many of those beautiful metallic-blue butterflies which occupy so conspicuous a place in collections of tropical insects. They fluttered lazily along the path before us, but as soon as they found themselves pursued, they rose, and made off to the right or left, where the dense tangled vegetation effectually prevented our following them.

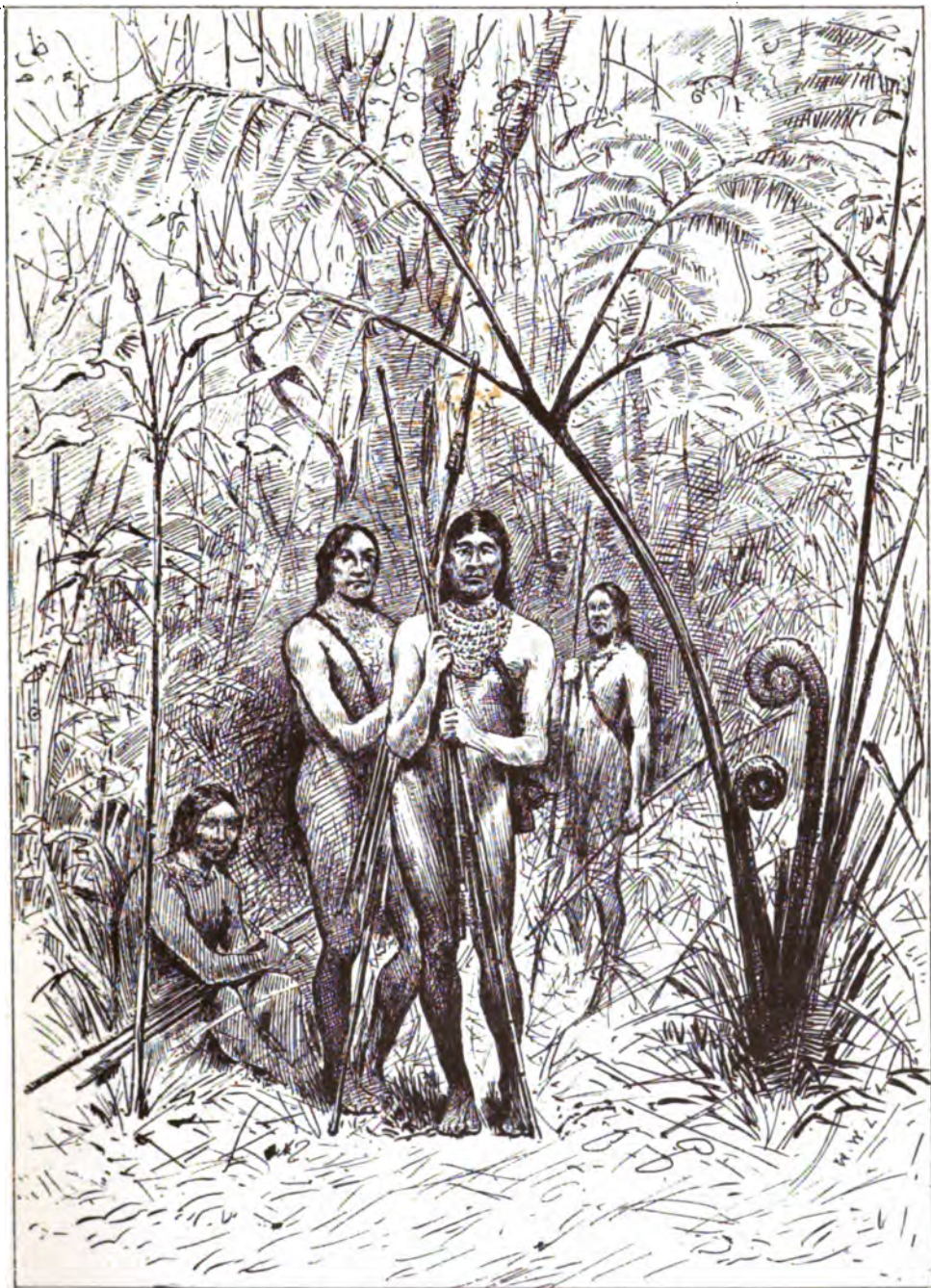
Bright-plumaged birds, tanagers, orioles and humming birds flashed to and fro occasionally, and far over head among the branches, wood-peckers and green parrots kept up an incessant chattering. It was, however, difficult to see them, they played at hide and seek amongst the orchids and parasites with which the great limbs of the trees were loaded. We passed several pools of water, around which waved tall bamboos, whose crests curved gracefully over the mirror-like surface in masses like ostrich plumes.

CHAPTER III.

SURINAM—*continued.*

THE GREAT EQUATORIAL FOREST.—MONKEYS.—PARASOL ANTS.—VEGETABLE THUGS.—PARASITES.—POISONED ARROWS.—IMPRESSIVE VIEW OF THE SIERRA DIVIDING GUIANA FROM THE BASIN OF THE AMAZON.—MY CREW MUTINY AND DISAPPEAR.—DESPERATE STRAITS.—RETURN OF THE DESERTERS.—AGAIN AT PARAMARIBO.

SOON after we entered the forest one of the sharp-eared dogs that accompanied the Indians gave tongue a few yards to our right, his master pushed his way leisurely through the dense tangled covert, and presently reappeared carrying a tortoise, which we sent back to the boat for future use. Half an hour later we heard a chattering overhead, and my escort stopped. One of them drew forth from a neatly made basket-work quiver a thin splinter of hard wood very sharply pointed; from another little basket he extracted some silky fibre, the produce of the silk cotton tree, and twisted it round the head of his arrow; his final operation was to dip its point into a receptacle like a dice-box made of cane smeared with resin and thus rendered waterproof. He then introduced the fatal shaft, about ten inches long, into his blow-pipe, singled out one of the monkeys whose garrulity had betrayed them, and gave a short sharp puff; the deadly messenger sped true,



MY INDIAN ESCORT, SURINAM

the unlucky victim snatched the splinter out of the wound and threw it down in a rage, he and his comrades immediately disappearing into the world of leaves overhead. The Indians waited. I thought we had seen the last of our quarry, but presently he came tumbling down through the foliage and fell amongst the undergrowth, whence he was retrieved by one of the dogs, and added to our game bag. The blow-pipe is about 8 feet long, 2 feet from the end are a couple of objects like black slugs, these are the sights between which aim is taken; they are composed of some kind of gum, resembling asphalte.

High up in the forks of many of the trees black irregular masses were discernible about the size of a hogshead, while on the trunks were semi-cylindrical tunnels leading down from these to the ground. The former are the homes of the parasol ants, the latter the avenues leading to the family mansion.

The nests are built of vegetable fragments cemented together with mud, the inhabitants are invisible, but should one of the covered ways be broken they issue forth in myriads, and woe be to the burglar who has "cracked their crib," should they get at him! They are the most vindictive little vixens in existence; and will swarm up his legs and overrun his whole body, making their sharp mandibles meet in his flesh, and clinging to him with such bull-dog tenacity that they submit to be pulled to pieces sooner than loose their hold.

They march through the forest in columns, each ant carrying a bit of leaf over his head—whence their name; they are said to be blind, nevertheless they feel the light, and dislike it so much that they screen their bodies as described. Their armies, which are evidently

disciplined, for their proceedings are regulated on a system as perfectly organized as any military host, appear to include officers, commanding and subordinate. We encountered several of these hordes on the march, and it is necessary to be careful not to step among them; the unwary traveller, who did so once, would never willingly repeat the transgression; each bite is accompanied by a sharp pain, and though in itself insignificant, yet when inflicted by thousands fever follows, not only from the multitudinous wounds, but also from the injection of formic acid into the blood.

I was told that there is a curious alliance between these insects and certain snakes, who are permitted to share their nests as lodgers. I suspect however that the hospitality extended to the reptiles is involuntary, and that they take toll of the citizens whom they honour with their company, whenever they feel hungry.

They have a more formidable enemy in the ant-bear, whose pachydermatous hide and wiry bristles are proof against their mandibles, and who licks them up by thousands with his slimy tongue protruded through the little hole which does duty as a mouth.

It would be a tedious business to attempt a detailed analysis of the constituents of the undercover. Amongst the more remarkable were numerous creeping and climbing palms, which could be traced to long distances, and had stems set with thorn-like bristles. Similar in nature were various canes and rattans. Some of the plants bore seeds from which root fibres depended before they were detached from their parents; this was certainly taking time by the forelock!

Life in this world is always more or less of a battle; it is eminently so with the vegetation of the equatorial

forest. There is something startling in the interne-cine struggle going on for light and air. Moreover plants can exhibit some of the same vices, and even commit some crimes analogous to those found amongst beings higher in the scale of creation, such as greediness, selfishness, treachery, ingratitude, the motive being the instinct of self-preservation.

Prominent among the criminals are certain plants producing caoutchouc. These start in the world as climbers; they begin operations by creeping up the stem of some tree of moderate size, to which they cling in an innocent confiding way, embracing their foster parent with graceful and affectionate reliance, until they grow strong enough to change their tactics; then they become aggressive, and throw out root-like fibres; these soon form a net-work around the trunk which has been the support of their infantile and childish period. The net-work spreads and thickens until it has developed into a complete casing; then the poor foster parent begins to be strangled; it is imprisoned in a fatal cylinder, it sickens, pines, and dies, and its unnatural *protégé* becomes a tree and reigns in its stead, after digesting the body of its nurse.

It might be supposed that the giants of the forest at least are safe from these vegetable Thugs; they however have their enemies in the shape of innumerable parasites which smother their upper branches. Some of these are orchids in great variety, some are large-leaved plants, then there are an infinity of creeping and climbing plants. From their lofty and wide-spreading heads there hang down tangled skeins of vegetable cordage. Some of these descend towards the ground like a single rope, without a leaf or a twig; they

spring from limbs a hundred feet overhead. When they reach the soil they take root, but a singular phenomenon then occurs; they always manage to fix their base at a considerable angle from the tree like the shrouds of a ship; up to the time of striking they descend vertically, but all those that have actually rooted assume an oblique direction like a ship's stays, and they seem to answer the same purpose. This vegetable cordage anchors the trees as it were to the ground, and enables them to resist the tremendous hurricanes which occasionally occur. It seems to be an arrangement specially provided by nature for their support. As soon as their fibres have entered the soil they begin to thicken and throw out foliage, forming a curious and remarkable feature of the equatorial forest.

I was bent on adding to my collection of plumage birds, but soon found that my gun was practically useless for this purpose, as if the birds were close at hand, their plumage was spoilt by the shot, and if they were at a distance in the forest, they fell into the dense covert out of reach, unless we cut our way through the bush to them, which would have occupied too much time. The Indians came to the rescue, and shot me some beautiful specimens with their arrows. When we came to an open space, there were sure to be humming birds, and these they obtained by means of the blow-pipe, using the splinters of wood already described, but applying no poison. These splinters are as sharp as a needle, and inflict a wound not much larger than the prick of that instrument. Of course the humming birds could only be shot at short range, but they are very tame and easy of approach. With regard to the poison, it is so deadly that the Indians

do not apply it until the moment before using the blow-pipe. I was told that if an Indian accidentally wounds himself with a poisoned arrow, he immediately lies down and resigns himself to his fate, knowing that nothing can save him. After a most interesting day in the forest, the Indians conducted me to their village near the river, and gave me a very handsome specimen of snake-wood, from which their bows are made. I shall have occasion to describe the interior of their homes later on.

I may mention here that these Indians spend their lives in drinking bouts, alternating with long periods of total abstinence. For many weeks they will hunt and collect skins, humming birds, and other articles of commerce, slaking their thirst with water only. When they have got together enough goods to be worth taking to town, they freight their canoes and transport them for sale to Paramaribo. They do not receive any money in exchange, but fish-hooks and ornaments, such as beads. The article that they attach the greatest importance to, however, is a demi-john of rum, which must be filled in their presence, for they are very suspicious. They squat round the big vessel, and the headman places his finger in its neck; it must then be filled until the spirit touches the tip of his finger, when he gives a grunt of satisfaction and carries the prize off to his canoe. He and his comrades return to their village, which may be many days journey distant. They never touch a drop of the rum until they reach home; they then take to their hammocks and continue "on the drink" until the vessel is empty, when they resume the sober phase of their existence, and the whole performance is gone through *da capo*.

I will not weary my readers by repeating descriptions of the different plantations at which we stopped. The last vestige of civilization was the temporary dwelling of a Government official—a Commissioner of Forests. He was engaged in drawing up a report on the varieties of timber to be found there, and showed me a collection of a hundred different sorts of wood, many of them exceedingly hard, others beautifully veined and coloured. He gave me much interesting information as to the forest and the tribes which inhabit it. Beyond this place we halted whenever an open space on the river occurred, at which to moor our boats for the night. We thus proceeded for some days amid increasing difficulties from rocks, shoals and rapids, and increasing discontent amongst my crew, who seemed discouraged by the awful solitude of the endless forest; moreover they were greatly afraid of the wild fierce negro tribes said to exist ahead of us. Lastly our provisions were running short. We arrived at a barren rocky hill of a rusty red colour, composed of ferruginous material, hostile to vegetation; this I ascended, and shall never forget the view from the summit that lay before me. Right in front, and bounding the southern horizon from east to west, extended like a wall, the range of mountains which separates the basin of the Amazon from the Guianas. On all sides I looked down upon the vast unexplored primeval forest, such as I have already described. Many of the trees were tufted with splendid blossoms which cannot be seen from below, for they crowd towards the sunlight. That robe of many colours lay spread beneath and around as far as the eye could see, covering plain and hill and valley and

mountain like a huge mantle; that interminable forest which crosses the mountain chain to the south, and sweeps down into the basin of the greatest river in the world—extending with little interruption from the mouth of the Amazon to the Andes, a distance of 3,000 miles, forming a belt about 1,000 miles wide. Its whole extent has been calculated to fall not far short of 3,000,000 square miles.

The sierra on which I gazed was the northernmost range of a chain of mountains extending for 450 miles from east to west, and forming the watershed between the basin of the Amazon to the south and the vast plains of Guiana to the north. It is the parent of all the great rivers of Guiana which flow northwards into the Gulf of Mexico, including the Corantyn, Essequibo, Berbice, Surinam, Maroni, Oyapok and Cayenne, as well as of a corresponding series of rivers which flow southwards into the Amazon.

The peaks and ridges that bounded the southern horizon rose in successive ranges one behind the other, the highest not exceeding, so far as I could judge, 5,000 feet; they were still distant, but mountain distances are so deceptive that it is safest not to hazard a conjecture.

I am on surer ground in estimating the latitude of the hill on which I was standing. Paramaribo is situated in latitude $5^{\circ} 45'$. I had made day by day as careful a calculation of the distance traversed as I could, which, allowing for the windings of the river, would have placed me in about latitude $3^{\circ} 30'$ north. The Sierra was covered to its highest summits with dense forest. I saw enough of the rugged barrier to the south to be convinced that it would oppose obstacles and difficulties of the most formidable description to

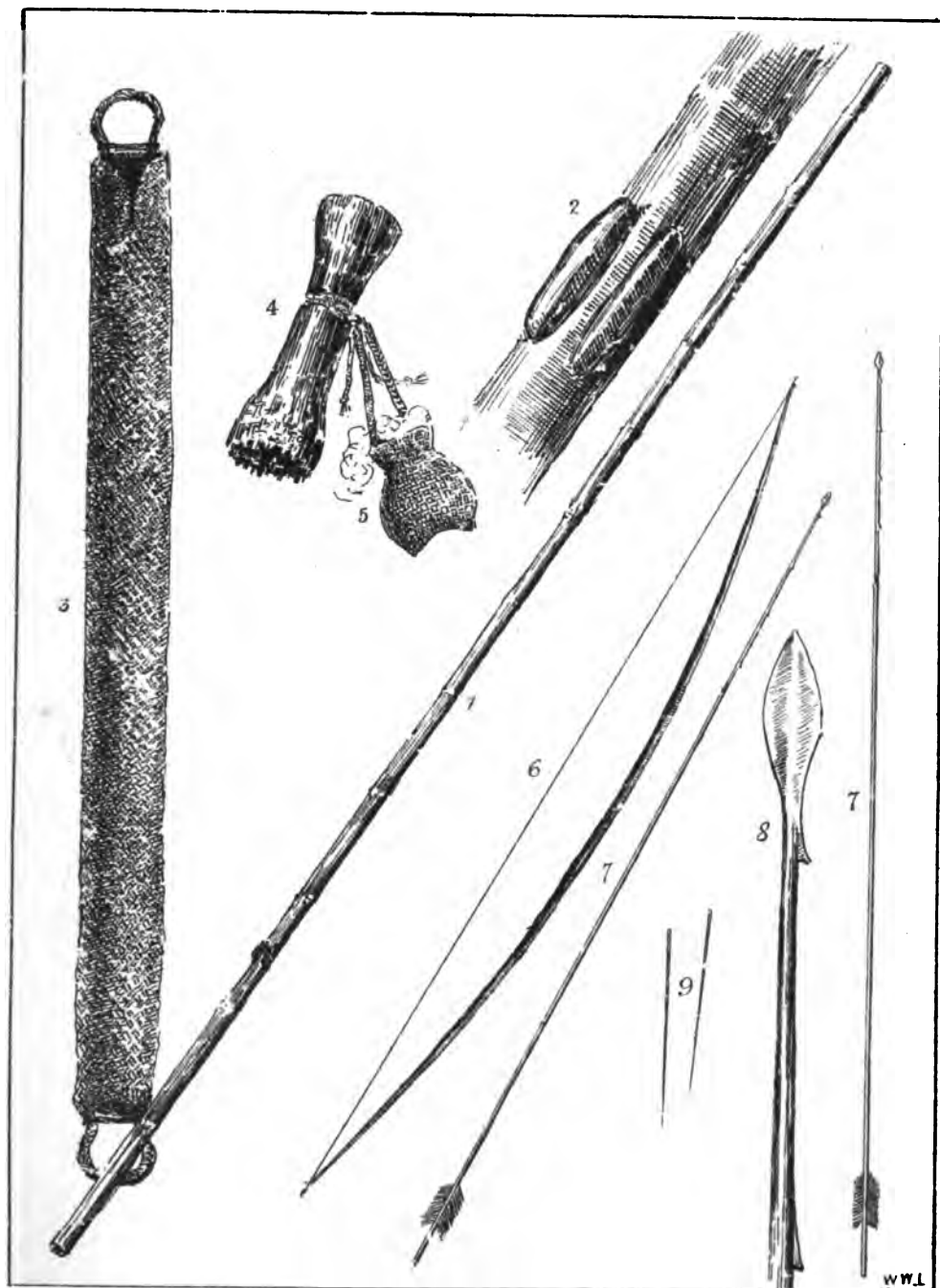
any attempt to reach the basin of the Amazon by that route, the two gravest being the density of the forests, and the opposition of the Bush negroes.

So far as I can ascertain, the feat has never yet been accomplished by any European. I had to content myself with the splendid view I had obtained of the edge of the Amazon basin, for reasons which I am about to narrate.

Soon after leaving this point we passed several tributaries, and the volume of the Surinam began to shrink very perceptibly. It became evident that much of its water supply is derived from the drainage of the portion of the forest, clothing the lower slopes of the Sierra. We encountered rapids and shallows with increasing frequency.

At last from muttered discontent my men proceeded to open mutiny, and declared they would go no further. I may mention that they were a crew of negro slaves furnished by a citizen of Paramaribo, whose acquaintance I had made, and I threatened to report their conduct to him, and for the moment the insurrection was quelled, and we got a little further. But one fine morning on coming forth from my cabin, I found the crew had disappeared into the forest. I waited some hours, but still no sign of them; it was manifest that they had deserted, and there was I, all alone, unable to do anything, single-handed, with the boat, or even to launch her, for she was aground. I took stock of the contents of the larder, and found it to consist of one ham and some boxes of biscuit. This was anything but a cheerful look-out, so in order to economise the provisions, I sallied forth into the woods, gun in hand, and presently espied an iguana,

INDIAN WEAPONS AND DOMESTIC APPARATUS



Nº1 Blow pipe. 2 Section of ditto showing sights. 3 Cassava strainer. 4 Quiver for poisoned Arrows.
 5 Basket for holding silk cotton. 6 Snakewood Bow. 7 Arrows 5 feet long. 8 Wooden Arrow point natural size
 9. Blow Pipe Arrows.

a kind of tree-lizard, several feet long. He was peering at me inquisitively from an overhanging limb; I fired and brought him down, but the echo that immediately resounded through the arcades of the forest, caused me to feel a sudden panic that the bush-negroes might be attracted by the sound, in which case my life would not have been worth many hours purchase, as they would have riddled me with poisoned arrows. I brought the iguana back to the boat and boiled some of the flesh, which proved to be by no means bad eating, something like a rather tough turkey. It was much improved by the addition of some of the ham, which, however, I thought it prudent to use sparingly, as I did not know how long I might be detained there.

Night came at last, but no signs of the crew. The following morning I began to sum up the alternatives that awaited me—a melancholy calculation. If the crew did not return it appeared to be a simple choice between starvation and assassination. I have already explained why I was debarred from eking out my commissariat with my gun. The prospect was not very exhilarating from whatever point it was viewed; another day dragged on in the same suspense as the last, and another lonely night amid the extraordinary variety of nocturnal forest noises which characterize the tropics. The next day, soon after sunrise, to my great relief the crew re-appeared, in a starving state, having been able to obtain no food of any description during their absence, except one snake, which they had eaten raw. I mounted guard over the provisions, and began to negotiate with them. They were still bent on returning, and I reflected that, after

all, even if I did reach the summit of the Sierra, which I could only do through the forest, I might not see even as much as I had beheld from the red hill, for I had satisfied myself that it was covered to the highest ridges with dense vegetation; I felt also that no reliance could be placed on such unwilling allies as my crew had proved themselves. I therefore reluctantly gave in, and consented to commence our *ἀνάβασις*. I promised that if they behaved well I would not report them, and I had no complaint to make during the rest of the voyage. That red hill proved my Pisgah.

On reaching the lower part of the river I renewed my acquaintance with the numerous planters who had so hospitably entertained me while upward bound, and thus returned to Paramaribo. I reached that metropolis on Christmas Eve, and went to the Moravian church, where a number of negro children, clothed in white calico, sang a hymn in negro dialect; the sermon being in the same tongue, I did not of course understand a single word of it. The women were all attired in snow-white frocks. The building contained fully 2,000 persons. The negro women here dress with much taste, wearing white turbans, with a quantity of white drapery, twisted Scotch-plaid fashion over their shoulders. They sometimes adopt odd devices—I have seen several enveloped in silk Union Jacks, imported from England. Except on state occasions the children wear nothing at all except strings of coral. The Moravian missionaries combine secular with spiritual avocations—they are bakers, butchers, grocers, tailors, shoemakers, &c.; their disciples always deal with them, so they convert them into customers as well as Christians, and drive the most flourishing trade in Paramaribo.

A citizen whose acquaintance I had made invited me to assist at a Christmas holiday function. It included a Christmas-tree, which was placed in a miniature garden composed of grass, sanded paths, flower-beds and little fountains. In one part of the garden stood the stable with models of the Virgin and Child inside; in another appeared Herod's palace with the Magi inquiring where the young child was; in a third was a hill with toy sheep upon it, and the shepherds tending them. The design was very pretty, and must have involved an immense amount of trouble and ingenuity. It was all illuminated with wax tapers; the tree itself was a mango, covered with the usual dolls, toys, and sweet-meats amid a general illumination of wax-tapers.

CHAPTER IV.

CAYENNE.

THE MARONI RIVER.—A CONVICT SETTLEMENT.—A CURIOUS PHENOMENON.—CAYENNE.—BADONEL.—THE GOVERNOR'S VISIT.—ESCAPED CONVICTS.—A TERRIBLE INCIDENT.—CONVICT TRADESMEN.—A GARDEN OF EDEN.—COASTING VESSELS.—AN UNSATISFACTORY INTERVIEW.

WHILE at Paramaribo I was informed that if I could only reach Cayenne I should find there a steamer for Para on the Amazon. No regular communication, however, existed between Paramaribo and Cayenne, and I was beginning to despair of carrying out my purpose when a French gunboat put in. I made the acquaintance of the captain and explained my difficulty. He said he was bound for Cayenne, and, most good-naturedly, offered me a lift. A pleasant trip resulted: the officers being all good fellows, and I was quite sorry when the voyage terminated.

Nothing noteworthy occurred until we entered the Maroni river in order to leave some cattle, stores, and despatches at a convict settlement about twenty-five miles up the stream. Here the best behaved of the convicts are promoted to reside in houses of their own, and to cultivate land on their own account. A considerable tract of forest has been

cleared, and three villages have been built among the burnt tree stumps; the colony includes a Government House and a college of Jesuit missionaries, a doctor's house, a barrack and officers' quarters, all constructed of planks obtained from the neighbouring woods and roofed with native shingles made by the hands of the colonists. The settlement is rendered picturesque by the single trees which their founders have had the good taste to leave standing; noble cancan, brown-heart, iron wood, and other giants of the forest extend their great limbs over the dwellings, and shade them from the sun, while long festoons of parasites droop from their branches and overhang the little colony with garlands of flowers, imparting to it an air of romance. The cottages are surrounded by gardens in which the ticket-of-leave men cultivate bananas, cassava, yams, sweet-potatoes, sugar-cane, tobacco and spices. I may mention here that on obtaining this partial enfranchisement they are permitted to select a wife from amongst the convict women, if they have the courage to draw in such a doubtful lottery. I must say, however, so far as I observed, the married couples seemed to get on pretty well.

On the other side of the river, which is about as broad as the Rhine, glistened the white houses and church steeple of a colony of Germans on Dutch territory, for the Maroni forms the boundary between the two dependencies. The French convict colony has not yet been established eighteen months, as I was informed by the Governor. On our way up we stopped at an Indian village to land three bulls with a view of improving the breed of cattle originally imported from the Orinoco. The mode of disembarkation was very

simple. A rope was run through a block at the yard-arm, and the end of it made fast round the base of the horns; the order was given to hoist away, and the unfortunate beasts were soon suspended over the water, their eyes starting out of their heads and their limbs kicking feebly as a protest. They were then lowered, revolving the while as if prematurely on the spit, and on reaching the surface of the river were cut adrift and left to reach terra firma as best they could. The edge of the river was fringed with cows, who seem to have come down to the beach to inspect the new beaux. I must say that these last made their *début* amongst their future wives under circumstances rather mortifying to their *amour propre*.

On the Maroni, as on all the South American rivers which I have visited, occur Indian villages surrounded by plantations of cassava and maize. A little fleet of dug-out canoes is generally moored close by. Such a community formed the background to the scene I have described. The Indians lazily watched the proceedings from hammocks slung in their huts, the sides of which are open, for their dwellings consist of nothing but a palm-leaf roof mounted upon a few bamboo posts, so that they could survey the interesting operations without the physical exertion involved in getting up. I suppose it was siesta time. Through an opera-glass I was enabled to view the interior economy of these huts perfectly; the hammocks were bed, sofa, chair, and ottoman all in one, a few earthen vessels and calabashes completed their domestic outfit; on the posts hung bows, arrows, blow-pipes and fish spears, the same as in the forest of the Surinam. While their lords were lolling in their

hammocks, the women were preparing cassava for their next family meal.

After we left the Maroni and put to sea again we encountered very boisterous weather from the north-east, and next morning it was so rough that one or two of the officers were sea-sick. I tried to console them by explaining that Nelson also occasionally suffered from the *mal de mer*.

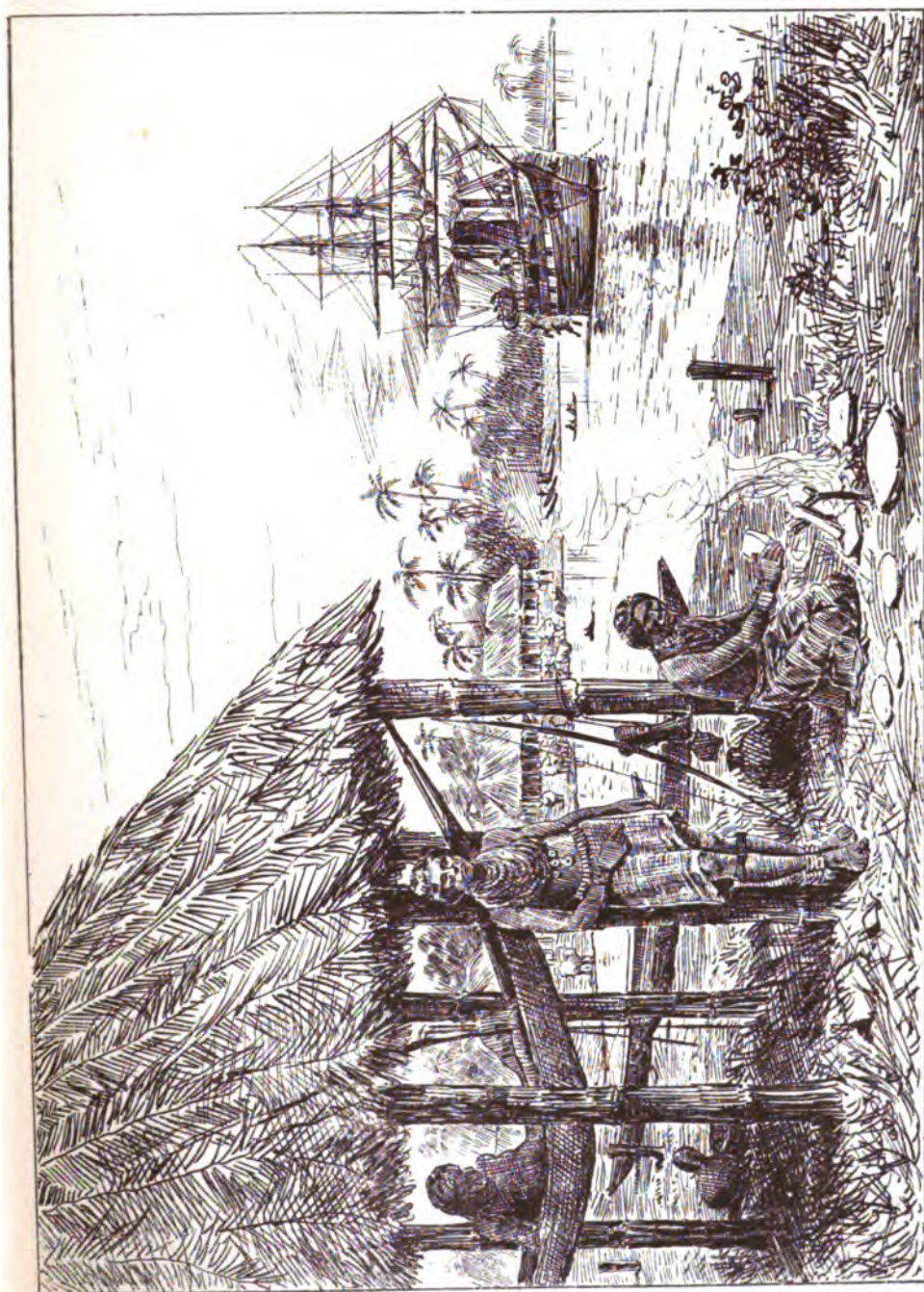
I witnessed a very curious phenomenon whilst off this coast. The captain stated that he would put in nearer the shore for shelter. We drew towards it until we found ourselves in a mixture of mud and water, known here as the "vase molle" (soft mud). It exists all along this portion of the Guiana coast. When we were fairly within it the rollers were obliterated, and the sea became almost calm—this was owing to the specific gravity of the water being increased by the mud to such a degree that the waves are checked. I have been informed that a similar phenomenon is observed in the Dead Sea, where the water is saturated with salt and its specific gravity thus increased to the point at which it is too heavy for waves to rise. The origin of the mud, thus held suspended, is the river Amazon, the vast flood from which is swept along the Guiana coast by the current setting into the Gulf of Mexico.

The term "Gulf Stream" is misleading, and probably arose from its having been traced to the Gulf and no further, but it originates in the tepid surface stratum of the equatorial Atlantic. It enters the Gulf *viâ* Cayenne, and leaves it between Cuba and Florida, having gained little or nothing in point of temperature. I have gauged its temperature at both

points. The current is so strong that it is with very great difficulty that sailing vessels can make head against it from Cayenne to the mouth of the Amazon. I found this to my cost, for my intention had been to proceed to the Brazils *viâ* Para, but my purpose was defeated by the cause I have stated. The sailing vessels that do make their way occasionally do so by a tedious navigation behind the islands which fringe the intervening coast. We breakfasted in peace, and the invalids made rapid recovery. We presently passed Sinamara River and settlement, and then reached Les Iles du Salut. On one of these dwell the political exiles—it is called "*L'Île des Diables*," though "*L'Île des pauvres Diables*" would be more appropriate.

The other two islands are occupied by 1,500 criminal convicts, whose labour has converted the rocks into terraces, gardens and houses. Most of the forest trees have been cut down for fuel. After a few more hours sail we reached Cayenne.

This town is situated on a bay of seven or eight miles in circumference; the country around is hilly, indeed almost mountainous, and very picturesque; the forest, of a peculiarly rich and beautiful green, comes down to the water's edge. Cayenne is built on a rocky eminence at the mouth of the bay, and is distinguished by the beauty of its palm trees; the sea-shore eastwards is broken into a series of beautiful little inlets with shelving sandy beach, and picturesque reefs of rock running out to sea in a succession of points, forming sheltered recesses delightful for bathing. Inland rise high hills, richly wooded and of bold and peculiar shapes. I took the temperature of the sea-water, and found it to be 84°.



SCENE ON THE MARONI RIVER.
CAYENNE.

There are many beautiful walks about Cayenne, where the temperature of the air is higher and varies more than at Paramaribo. I felt, however, particularly well while there, and had an excellent appetite; indeed that was a peculiarity that seemed to characterize the inhabitants generally. The French citizens seem to have lost none of their characteristic energy; being just as animated, mercurial and energetic as on the banks of the Seine. They take great pains to develop the splendid resources of the country around them; they plant caoutchouc; they raise cotton, sugar, and spices; they search the forests for roots and balsams. They alone have taken pains to cultivate and improve the fruits of the country: for instance, the mango of the British West Indies is a fibrous fruit with a strong taste of turpentine, the French have by dint of grafting and cultivation produced a mango free from fibre, luscious to a degree, of exquisite flavour, and of great size. The pine-apples are enormous—in fact this region is their paradise, for they here enjoy a bottom heat of 82° and a temperature overhead of between 80° and 90° , day and night, and all the year round. There are several varieties. Some are so deep a purple as to be almost black, some of them yellow, some red, some almost white. The Government have established a botanic garden embosomed among the hills, a veritable garden of Eden, surrounded by virgin forest which forms a splendid setting for the triumphs of cultivation. Here plants are raised for the convict allotments and given gratis to the cultivators.

Badonel is three miles from Cayenne. It is reached by a well-macadamized road, fringed by a dense avenue

of forest trees. There are numerous other good roads leading from the town in all directions. Government House is a square lined with palm trees four deep, forming cloisters whose shafts are the palm trunks from five to eight feet in girth, running up as straight as Doric columns to the height of seventy feet, the rich green fronds forming graceful and beautiful arcades, and reminding one of the aisles of a cathedral.

Cayenne is the naturalist's paradise—birds of brilliant plumage, the most curious insects, the most exuberant vegetation are all to be seen close to the town, and may be visited by good roads; and whatever fatigues the traveller may have incurred are solaced by an excellent dinner at a well appointed French restaurant; and he will sleep in a scrupulously clean French bed, white as snow, with capital mosquito curtains; the wines which in Demerara cost eight shillings a bottle he will get here for fifteen pence, and the courtesy which he will not get in Demerara *at any price* he will get here for nothing. The streets are lighted at night with something more effective than the fire-flies which at Georgetown form the only lamps after dark. Even the negroes have imbibed some French polish, and are less insolent and disagreeable than other free negroes. Everywhere, to the negro, liberty is as a jewel in a swine's snout—they connect no noble sentiment with it, and value it only as the key to indolence.

I paid my respects to the Governor, who offered me a free passage up the river in one of the Government steamers. He sent his aide-de-camp to return my visit. I was just changing my wet boots and stockings at the moment I heard a knock, and incautiously exclaimed "Come in!" thinking it was the Hindoo

servant. To my horror the word "Entrez!" caused the entry of an officer in full uniform, whom I had the mortification to receive with one boot on and one boot off, and in a toilet damaged by a tropical shower.

I gladly availed myself of the Governor's courteous offer, and visited one or two of the penal settlements on the Cayenne river.

The convicts had, most of them, a tolerably cheerful air, but there were many very evil countenances among them; some had been transported for murder. A few weeks ago four of them escaped into the woods—a murderer aged 56, a soldier who had deserted, and two thieves, young men. Their intention was to make their way to Demerara, where the English would protect them, extradition of criminals being contrary to Demerara law. They failed to find food in the forest, and were at last reduced to a starving condition, which resulted in the following incident.

One of the young men was possessed of some snuff; the senior of the party either thinking to assuage the pangs of hunger by its means, or casting about for an excuse for an act of murder and cannibalism, asked him for a pinch, which the owner refused to part with. The man thereupon took the other two aside, and told them that the Naboth of the snuff-box was a bad comrade, and that he would be revenged. They expostulated; the old man returned to the charge and again demanded snuff, and was again refused. He then sent the rest of the party to gather fire-wood, and took the opportunity of stabbing his unfortunate comrade. The details of the act of cannibalism which followed, and in which all

but the soldier were accomplices, are too revolting to be described. They were eventually captured, tried, and guillotined at Cayenne during my stay ; the soldier alone being acquitted. I was invited to witness the execution, which took place publicly, but was not sufficiently strong-minded to avail myself of the opportunity. There are 300 convicts at Maroni, the flower, morally speaking, of a body of 6,000 criminals who are dispersed among the various penal establishments at Cayenne—

True patriots all, for be it understood,
They left their country for their country's good.

The convicts are organized on the military model, divided like soldiers into companies, and promoted to be corporals and sergeants as a reward for good conduct, in which case they receive pay, and are employed in the supervision of the others ; but the highest reward of all is a cottage on the Maroni. The most exemplary of them used to be permitted to work at their trades in the town of Cayenne, free from all restraint, except the eye of the police. But a petition was presented by the townspeople to the Emperor pressing him to withdraw the ticket-of-leavers from among them, which was granted, and an order came down the other day commanding the removal of all to the Maroni. This caused much distress, the poor fellows having to sell their stock in trade at a great loss, and break up the little web of ties, interests and associations which they had woven over the black past.

I had ordered a collection of some of the forest-woods of an ex-convict, but on going to see how he was getting on I found the shutters up, the lathe stopped, the shop cleared out and the owner in dire tribulation. He

was quite in despair at seeing the fruits of several years of industry thus scattered to the winds. He told me that he should lose at least 1,000 francs by the sale of his property, but that was the least of his miseries; it was his banishment to the Maroni that made him heart-broken. There is considerable mortality amongst the convicts in consequence of their being closely crowded in the dormitories at night. Cayenne itself is not unhealthy, as the appearance of the townspeople proves.

While here I spent an evening with an old French gentleman and his family. One of the latter was a ship's captain, and he spun many a yarn, and related some interesting adventures. The evening was passed not in the house, but Eastern fashion, on the top of it—an airy and delightful arrangement. Before dinner my host showed me his garden, in which he took great pride. In the middle was a miniature lake, with an island in the centre reached by a bridge. The island he christened St. Helena, in memory of the departed hero of France, of whom he is a most enthusiastic admirer. It is fringed with a shrub called the burning bush,—the foliage being deep-green, blazing with scarlet flowers. It was a veritable botanic garden, containing most of the specimens of the fruits and flowers of the country—cinnamon, clove trees, coffee, cocoa, mango, sugar-apple, star-apple, shaddock, lime, orange, annatto, mamee-apple, guava, quassia, cabbage and wax palms, banana, fig, sour-sop, tropical cherry (cachou) and plum, sapodilla, granadilla, and many orchids and flowering shrubs. But he pointed with the greatest pride to a peach-tree, which of course is here an exotic. It had been imported from France, and coaxed into growing in an entirely

uncongenial climate. He told me that this was the only success he had scored in the way of acclimatization, all his other attempts having failed. There was one exception, however, viz. a grape-vine. This produced three crops of grapes in the year, appearing to have lost all count of seasons. He manages this little garden of Eden entirely himself, weeding, digging, planting, pruning, and all; and he had his reward in a hale, ruddy, healthy old age. He explained everything with the characteristic energy and enthusiasm of a Frenchman. I was required to carve my autograph on a great cactus, which reared itself in the form of a thick six-sided column fifteen feet high. On it were inscribed two hundred names of visitors. He complained that the vampires ate his fruit, and that the little lake was full of water-snakes, which his grand-children caught instead of eels. There are snakes in every Paradise!

Amongst the curious trees at Cayenne is one called the *Arbre des Etrangers*, which figures on the cover of this volume. I saw some specimens of it there in blossom. It sends up a seed stem, barbed like a fish-spear.

After a pleasant and interesting sojourn at Cayenne, I tried to reach the Brazils viâ Para at the mouth of the Amazon; it seemed so provokingly near—the very sea was yellow with the mud of that colossus of rivers, and yet I was assured that the most eligible way of getting thither was viâ Southampton, 6,000 miles away!

There was no steam communication, and only an occasional coaster. I was shown one of these; a grotesque cross between a Chinese junk and

Noah's ark. Its trading trips took it behind the reefs, where it crept along by easy stages, dodging the current and picking up such things as the Indians had for barter. One of their articles of export was gold-dust, brought down from the mountainous interior in birds' quills; no consideration would induce the taciturn traders to reveal the source of their supply. Other articles were skins, feathers, humming birds (dried), hammocks woven of grass and tastefully stained of various colours. These are in great favour with Brazilian ladies, who spend much of their time languidly swinging in them, and contemplating existence from afar as it were.

Time is no object to the uncouth craft described above, and they usually take a month in reaching Para. The specimen now under review belonged to a Portuguese merchant, and was commanded by a skipper of the same nationality. I chartered a boat, boarded her, and interviewed her captain, who was smoking in his hammock. He received me with a greasy smile, radiating from a fat and oily countenance, and answered my queries in a drawling voice, without even taking the trouble to sit up.

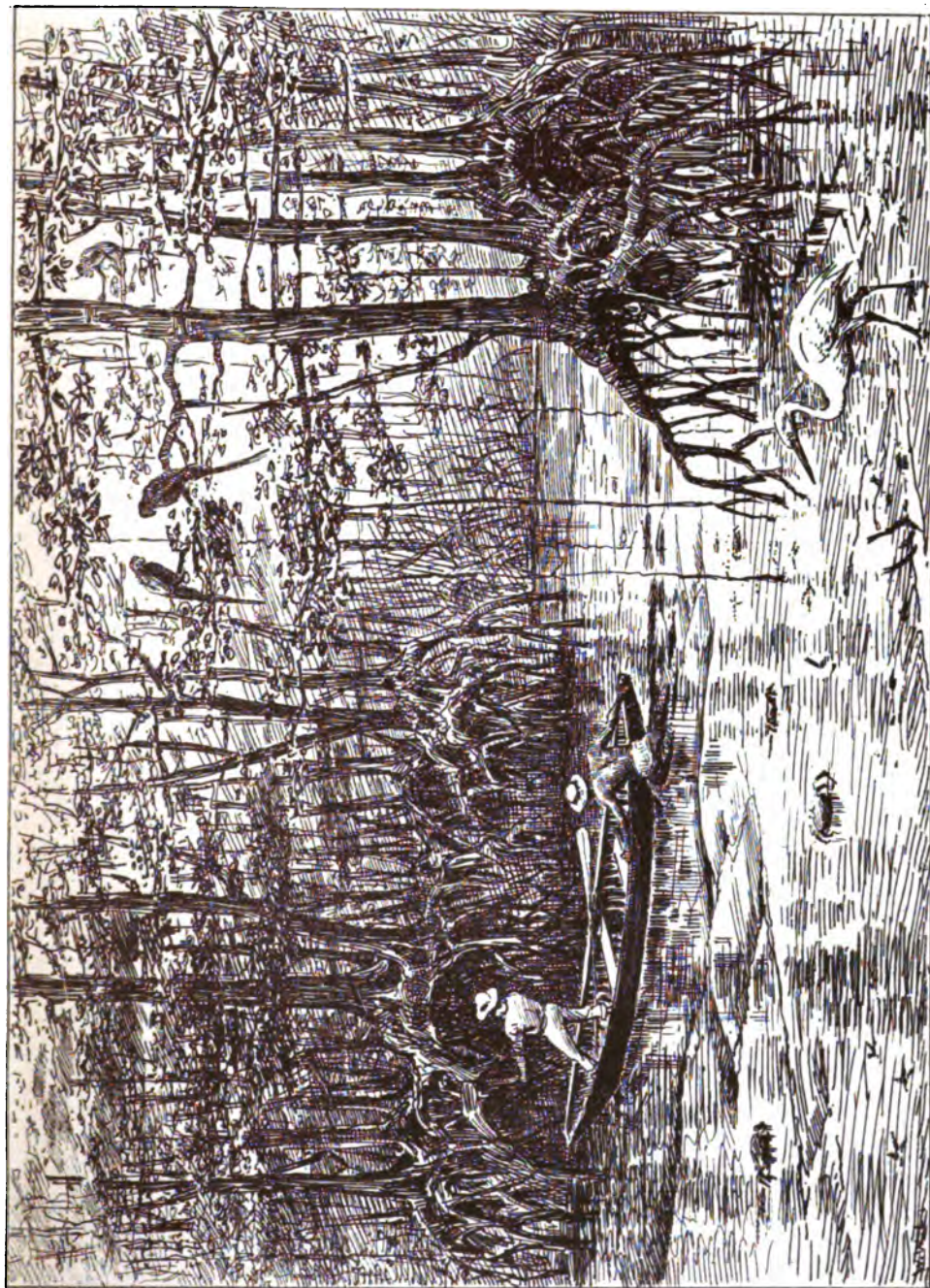
I scarcely knew which was the most discouraging, the captain or his ship; the latter was a literally preposterous structure, her stern doing duty as stem, and *vice versa*, her bow presenting a dead flat surface, whereas her stern was sharp. The impression produced on my mind was that the man who rigged her was drunk and popped the bowsprit at the wrong end, fixing the rest of the rigging under the same influence.

After struggling through an indifferent cigar, and an unsatisfactory dialogue, I took leave, having made up

my mind that the guillotine would be preferable to a month in the society of such a commander.

There remained one other alternative, and that was to travel across the mountains under the guidance of the Indians, through the endless obstacles and intricacies of the forest; but the rainy season had set in, we should have had to wade through continuous swamps, and after several weeks of toil, with a good chance of fever, I should have found myself on the wrong side of the giant flood, for Para is on the southern shore.

I therefore made up my mind to console myself by a trip to the Orinoco instead. I may mention here that this great river is twin brother to the Amazon, the Rio Negro, as its upper waters are called, being united to the former by a branch called the Cassiquiari. The junction takes place far up amongst the slopes of the Andes. Thus they come into the world tied together like the Siamese twins, sharing the same cradle, though the termination of their careers is consummated nearly 1,000 miles apart.



A MORNING IN A MANGROVE SWAMP
THE ESSEQUIBO.

CHAPTER V.

DEMERARA.

GEORGETOWN. — THE ESSEQUIBO RIVER. — MANGROVE THICKETS.—AN UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCE.—CLIMBING FISH.—A NATIVE VILLAGE.—PETTY SESSIONS COURT. —NEGRO SCHOOL-CHILDREN.—GEORGETOWN AGAIN. —VOYAGE RESUMED. — MY FELLOW-TRAVELLERS.—A CHEQUERED HONEYMOON.—FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE ORINOCO RIVER.

A SCHOONER had arrived with a cargo of cattle from the Orinoco river, for the use of the garrison and the convicts. The captain was a Venezuelan Spaniard, who spoke a smattering of English ; with him I made a bargain that I was to have for my own use his cabin—the only one the little craft boasted—and after a good cleaning we set sail. These schooners are of American build, and excel in beating to windwards, a most necessary accomplishment, for they have to bring their load of live stock all the way from the mouth of the Orinoco, in the teeth of the trades, and against the current to boot.

My only fellow passengers were a shaggy Newfoundland dog, with whom the climate manifestly disagreed, as he lay panting on deck all day, and a lively little Cuban terrier christened Don Juan, owing to his disreputable behaviour.

When we got to sea, a gale of wind arose,

before which we tore through the water at racing speed, having the current also in our favour. We ran 600 miles in less than sixty hours, and reached Demerara in two days and a half.

The portion of Guiana upon which Georgetown is situated is extremely low, some of the land in the vicinity being eight feet beneath high-water level, and only kept afloat as it were by immense embankments and sea walls. It was originally a Dutch settlement, and they seemed fired with an ambition to create in the New World a tropical Holland. The dykes at Georgetown are still kept in repair under the control of Dutchmen, who have the advantage of experience; their fatherland having been wittily described as a kingdom drawing fifty feet of water! The country about Georgetown is intersected by dykes and canals, and is extraordinarily fertile. To a depth of one hundred and seventy feet the soil has been found to consist of vegetable remains mixed with alluvial drift. Here, therefore, as in Surinam, it is manifest that the coast has been sinking.

The vegetation is magnificent, every house being surrounded by beautiful flowering trees covered with scarlet, orange, cinnamon-coloured, white, yellow or lilac blossoms of varied forms; orange-trees twenty-five feet high, loaded with golden fruit, shaddock, lime, mango, mammee-apple, banana, plantain, and bread-fruit. Most of these have large, flexible, shining leaves, and harbour various air-plants in their branches, which hang in graceful festoons from the limbs of the parent tree. Above these rich gardens tower Royal and Cocoa palms; the cotton plant, which in the United States is a delicate little shrub three feet

high, here grows to a height of twenty feet and upwards; noble oleanders, cactus and aloes bloom around the houses. Good macadamized roads radiate from the town; they are lined with villas embowered amidst such vegetable treasures as would cause the gardeners at Kew to be consumed with envy. The face of the country is covered with sugar plantations, tall factory chimneys and long low whitewashed buildings are scattered about in all directions; they are sugar works, and their chimneys are the first harbingers of land which on this low coast are discernible to the mariner. The Demerara and Essequibo rivers are the home of the Victoria Regia lily, which is found in quiet pools and backwaters in their vicinity.

While at Demerara, I made an excursion to the Essequibo, ascending to a distance of about fifty miles from Georgetown, which, be it remembered, is not upon the Essequibo, but upon the Demerara river. During this trip I took the opportunity of exploring the twenty-five islands which diversify the estuary of the Essequibo from its embouchure nearly to its confluence with the Cuyuni and Mazaruni rivers. They vary in size from twelve miles in length to five, two, and one, and are covered with dense forest, except where plantations and villages occur. They are all fringed with mangrove thickets, as I found to my cost. I was compelled, owing to circumstances beyond my control, to make much closer acquaintance with these weird and sinister forms of vegetation than I ever wish to do again; it fell out on this wise. I engaged a canoe to ferry me across to a large island on which existed a settlement; the distance did not exceed three-quarters of a mile, my gondolier was a negro,

and with characteristic want of forethought he took no account of the state of the tide. As we approached our destination, the water grew shallow, and suddenly we grounded on a bank, the water ebbed rapidly away, and we were presently hopelessly stranded with 500 yards of mud between us and terra firma; a fetid green slime covered the surface, from beneath which the sun soon began to draw bubbles of sulphuretted hydrogen, diffusing an unwelcome perfume of rotten eggs, and our efforts failed to move the canoe.

My dingy Charon observed considerably "'Spouse *me* stay here, *me* get fever," and with that he vaulted out of the boat, intending to make his way to land, and leave me in the lurch; but he immediately sank up to his middle in the tepid filth, and I don't know how much deeper he would have descended had he not held on by the gunwale. This experience convinced him that there was no alternative but to remain and help to get the canoe to shore. I worked the paddles and he shoved at the stern. After an hour's hard struggle we manœuvred her to the mouth of a narrow creek, at the head of which was a landing place, but the clay was so tenacious here that for some time we failed to move her further; on either hand we were hemmed in with impenetrable mangrove thickets, whose arching roots formed caverns and arcades over the mud. There issued forth from beneath these recesses swarms of mosquitoes of the most vicious sort. However, it was not a time for killing flies; I knew that after sunset, enemies far more deadly were to be apprehended; that mists laden with fever and ague would creep forth from those mysterious root caverns. We redoubled our exertions, and forced the boat close to the labyrinth of

roots, by the aid of which we managed to tug her along a foot at a time. We were within six degrees of the equator, the sun shone full upon us, the atmosphere resembled a vapour bath, and if there is any virtue in perspiration we certainly had the benefit of it.

On the banks below the mangroves were shoals of fish about the size of perch basking in the sun; they appeared to be quite amphibious, and came out of the water to enjoy themselves under the rays of Phœbus. I have been told that they also climb the mangrove bushes in search of flies, but this is a variety entertainment which I did not witness; it certainly would be an original method of rising to a fly. I have, however, often picked the delicious little mangrove oysters from the overhanging boughs, as also the violet crab, which climbs their branches in order to indulge his taste for natives, of which he is as fond as a London ballet-girl.

Amongst the peculiarities of this eccentric member of the vegetable creation, is its habit of sending down roots from its branches which dangle thirty or forty feet overhead, but being tenacious of purpose they grow steadily downwards until they reach the mud. Like the baby hero of Pears' Soap they are not happy till they reach it. Once their fibres have penetrated they throw fresh shoots upward, and become independent trees; the whole grove is thus connected together like the banyan. In these latitudes the race is to the swift, and the mangrove is not the plant to lose any time in the business of development.

It is impossible to imagine anything more complicated and intricate than the resulting labyrinth. Royal Henry ought to have hidden Rosamond in a mangrove

thicket. The most jealous of Queens would never have tracked her to her bower.

After two hours of the severest exertion we reached the head of the creek and stepped forth on terra-firma rejoicing. I shall remember the smell of the fermenting mud and the sinister spider-like mangrove roots as long as I live. Sambo said he would not go through it again for fifty dollars, and I believe him.

At the back of the mangroves rose the forest—such a tangled mass of tree ferns, arborescent grasses, gorgeous flowers, creepers, parasites and orchids, with a variety of palms waving over them. No pencil could convey an idea of the richness of the forests that cover the islands of the Essequibo. A road from the landing-place led to a large village containing a Petty Sessions Court, in which a colonial Solomon was in the act of administering justice to as motley a crowd of litigants as ever were assembled in one spot.

There were coolies from the Ganges, Chinamen from Canton, cunning-looking Portuguese, and oily Africans male and female, each in their national dress, the Hindoos sporting the gayest colours. To what shifts are our colonists reduced in order to secure labour to keep their estates going since the Emancipation, and to what outlandish crews is John Bull indebted for his sugar and spice !

The Chinese are physically the finest of these foreign labourers ; they are brawny, deep-chested fellows, industrious and intelligent, but not to be trusted further than they can be seen. The Hindoos on the contrary are a miserable-looking lot, small, feeble, and the reverse of muscular ; their legs are so thin as scarcely to cast a shadow—quite Chippendale. The

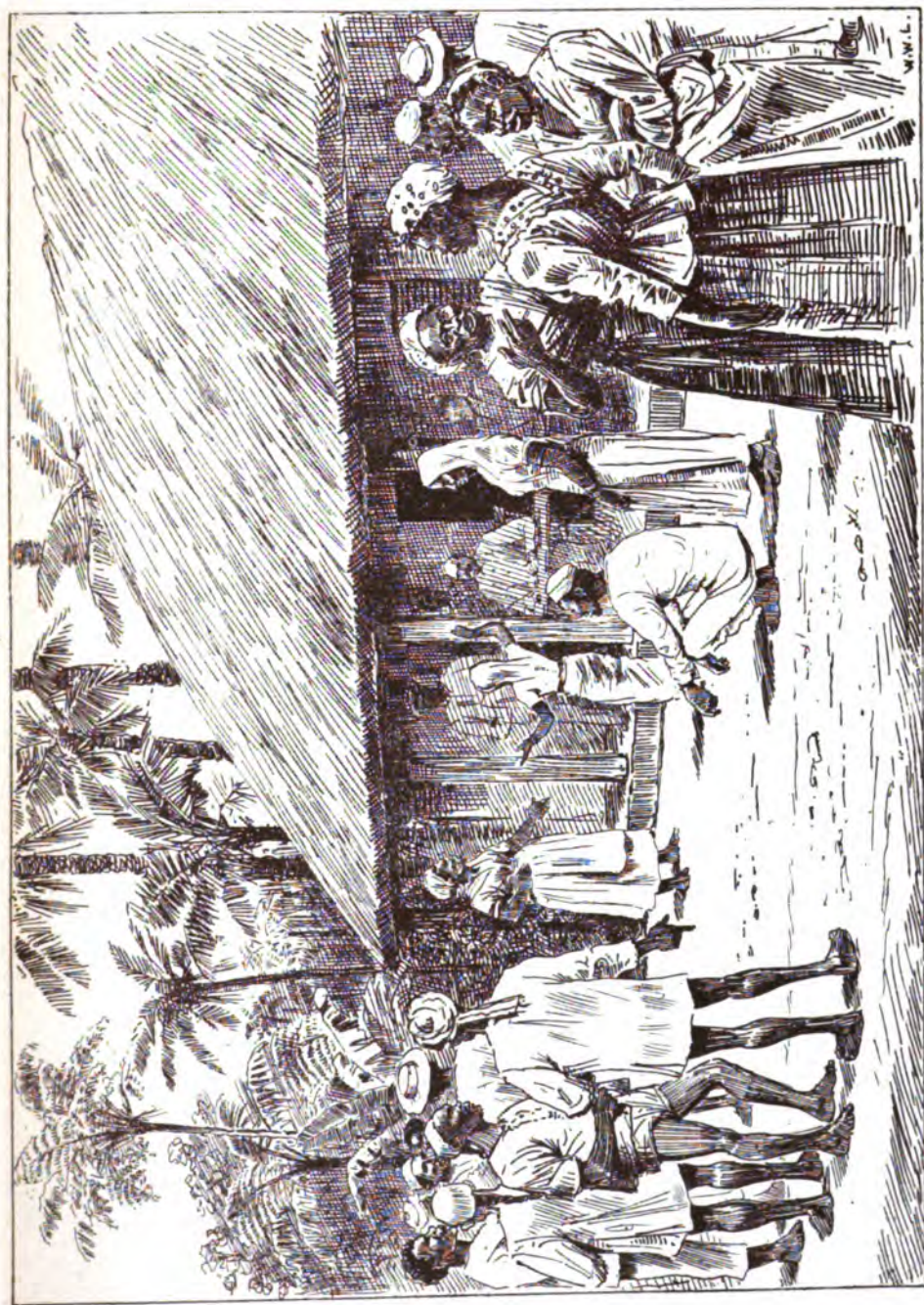
brawny negro looks as if he could swallow half a dozen disciples of Vishnu at a meal. The men wore Greek jackets and skull caps of bright-coloured cotton, a cotton cloth twisted round their loins ; their mahogany legs, which they don't appear to think worth clothing, are always left bare. The Hindoo women were attired in a long bedgown-looking dress with short sleeves, their dusky arms adorned with silver bracelets, coral round their necks, earrings in their ears and silver rings on their ankles, and bangles, or anything glittering, in their hair.

The negroes view the Hindoos with contempt, but the wily cunning of the latter generally proves too much for them, and in any quarrel they are sure to get the best of it in the end. There is a very decided antipathy between the two races. I saw a negro chuck a pretty Hindoo woman under the chin ; she pursued him and spat in his face, pouring forth a torrent of invective which hurt his feelings none the less for that it was in an unknown tongue, and therefore of unknown malignity ; from my knowledge of Oriental formulæ of vituperation I should conjecture that she was invoking curses upon Sambo's male and female ancestors retrospectively to the third and fourth generation, or even perhaps to Ham ! The majority of police cases dealt with were of indentured Hindoos who had absconded from their employers. The punishment consisted of thirty days' hard labour. As soon as sentence had been pronounced, the Asiatics folded their arms and stood with their eyes wide open, blazing like a couple of lighted candles, though with what passion those dark orbs burned it would be difficult to define.

I noticed that both amongst the Chinese and the

Hindoos little pills of opium were passed about from one to the other. A good many cases were tried. In one of them the plaintiff was a thin negress showily dressed, who accused one of her neighbours of calling her bad names; the defendant was a fat, untidy-looking, coloured woman. The witness for the former was a little ebony girl, twelve years old, who gave her evidence with her arms folded, and struck an attitude as statuesque as a little Memnon. She brought out without the slightest hesitation a string of expressions which would have set Billingsgate aghast. Meanwhile the fat defendant set her arms a-kimbo, looking slaps and pinches at her, but the sturdy little damsel kept her eyes fixed on his Worship and was not to be intimidated. The witness for the defence was a one-eyed Portuguese woman, who kissed the book with a smack which set the whole Court tittering.

Not far from the Court-house I came upon a merry crew of black school children, who were out for their play-hour. They were engaged in a game of cat-and-mouse; the circle of playmates were chanting a song, and as long as it continued the cat and mouse stood motionless, the instant it ceased puss made a rush at her prey, and the chase continued in and out until the song was struck up again, when cat and mouse once more stood as if spell-bound, and the performance was repeated until the prey was caught, or puss exhausted. The mouse was a pot-bellied little rogue with round smooth oily limbs, which made him as slippery to hold as an eel. Clothing did not appear essential to the toilet of the little party. I had a conversation with the schoolmaster as to the capabilities of the negro children. He told me that up to the age of twelve they were



A POLYGLOT PETTY SESSIONS
THE ESSEQUIBO.

intelligent and quick to learn, but at that age their minds seemed to suffer an arrest of development. This perhaps accounts for a certain childishness which is observable in adult negroes of both sexes. His statement was subsequently confirmed by a clergyman whom I met in Jamaica.

I got back to Georgetown without further adventure, but the signal flag was up, the wind fair, and the captain impatient, so adieu to Demerara.

Two passengers had joined our party—a young German merchant and his bride, whom he had been to Europe to marry. Nature had endowed her with blonde hair and a fair complexion, and, as is not unusual with brides, she was very pretty. Of course I could do no less than offer to give up my cabin to the interesting young couple, and become a deck passenger.

Unfortunately, the schooner had brought a stock of mosquitoes from the Orinoco, who were not long in finding out the poor young thing. It was a long time since they had had such a treat, and as I lay on deck I used to hear her lamentations, which lost none of their force and point from being poured forth in the German language.

There was also a fine tom-cat on board, who amused himself by boxing Don Juan's ears. The remaining member of the live stock was a curious tortoise, black and covered with red spots. He was another play-fellow of Don Juan's. Their game was hide and seek—the tortoise used to peep out his head, whereupon the dog pounced on him and caused it to disappear. He avenged himself by seizing his comrade by the leg. The reptile quite entered into the fun of the thing, as was plain, for as soon as he had had enough of it he used to turn his

back on his playmate, and march off at a brisk pace. I grieve to say that his end was tragic. Fresh provisions ran low, the poor chelonian was turned into soup, and stewed for the officers' dinner, and Don Juan gnawed his playfellow's leg for the last time. Such are the world's vicissitudes !

Nothing could exceed the devotion of the bridegroom, Herr von Krohn. The fair bride was a bad sailor, and evidently did not find sea-faring a satisfactory way of passing the honeymoon. Her husband was incessantly diving below, and fetching up preserves of all kinds. In vain did the poor little thing remonstrate that she could not swallow a morsel more—he would take no excuse, and crammed her like a Strasburg goose. Herr von Krohn had, however, another occupation besides the above named ; much of his time was engaged in rubbing his bride's mosquito bites with half lemons. Her arms and hands were one mass of wounds, and when we got into the Orinoco, and the mosquitoes were at their worst, her dress was sewn together underneath her feet, and her sleeves below her hands ; she was besides thickly veiled, and altogether I am afraid did not appreciate the Tropics.

The captain is a Venezuelan Spaniard, Anglo-Saxon in appearance and manner, and very quiet. He speaks enough English to enable us to converse. In the evening he plays to his crew on the accordion, weather permitting. In the course of a day or two he announced that we were in the Orinoco. This took me by surprise, as on looking round I could see no land ; however he had a bucket of water drawn up in proof, and to my astonishment I found it sweet, or only slightly brackish.

The branch of the great river which we were entering

is twenty-five miles wide at its mouth, but presently islands began to appear here and there, and in three or four hours we found ourselves amongst a perfect archipelago, densely covered with tropical forest. The width between these islands varies greatly; sometimes there is a mere narrow canal, sometimes a broad river; occasionally the passage was so narrow that we brushed the trees with our spars. Herr von Krohn had a capital opera-glass, through which I was enabled to analyze the mass of vegetation as perfectly as if I had been amongst it. There are plenty of wild turkeys, macaws, monkeys, etc., also wild pigs, tapirs, and jaguars. This is only one of the five mouths of this vast flood, which differs from the Amazon in being perfectly clear, as it is derived from a granite region. It is the same which the last expedition under the auspices of Sir Walter Raleigh selected for their ill-starred enterprise. Students of history will remember the incidents of the attack on San Thome, and its destruction, an error on the part of his Lieutenant (Captain Keymis) which cost poor Sir Walter first the life of his son, who perished in the battle, and finally his own head. I believe I am right in stating that the site of San Thome is occupied by the existing town of Angostura, for which we were bound.

The scenery was really charming, often having the character of lake views constantly varied. There were hundreds of islands of all shapes and sizes, from the dimensions of a mere hummock crested with a few trees, to islands thirty miles in length; occasionally the effect was as of the confluence of several rivers, great and small. Narrow creeks sometimes separated the islands, presenting a vista of

perpendicular forest, while on either hand the shores differed from those of the Surinam in being accessible, no mangroves barring the approach, and arborescent lilies occurred only in patches; but the shore was lined with emerald-green borders of water-grasses, on which the manatees delighted to feed. On the surface of the current there floated vast rafts of blue and red lotos. From the trees hung masses of scarlet blossoms, climbing to a height of fifty or sixty feet. I succeeded in getting some samples of these, and to my surprise I found that they were the ordinary scarlet runner of English cottage gardens, differing only in size. This, however, made all the difference, for each flower was four inches long, and formed one of a large cluster. They presented a brilliant appearance. I do not suppose that this noble parasite would acknowledge its degenerate English descendant. If it could be grown in hot-houses bearing flowers on the same scale as I saw here, it would be pronounced to equal in splendour the most gorgeous of our stove plants. We saw plenty of wild sugar-cane, and fan palms, and a very beautiful arborescent grass, which I had not observed before. There were ample opportunities for observing all these things, for, as I said before, our schooner often brushed the forest foliage with her yard-arm.

The lower part of the river is a perfect solitude—not a canoe, nor a native, nor a patch of cassava is to be seen; the tapirs, the jaguars, ant-bears, anacondas, and vampires, have it all to themselves. I saw three tapirs taking their evening bath; they saluted us with a trumpeting noise, but did not seem to be in the least alarmed. Plenty of macaws flew in pairs over our heads, also a large kind of wild duck, resembling the

Muscovy ; flamingos paraded their scarlet uniforms, and stalked along the water's edge ; a manatee or two poked their snouts above water, and puffed like grampuses—they have flippers and suckle their young at the breast. Monkeys held noisy conferences in the trees ; and we often heard the peculiar cry of the wild turkey from amongst the dense cover. Above us towered the giants of the forest, some with dome-shaped heads, others open and feathery.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ORINOCO.

RIVER TRAVELLING — A PLAGUE OF MOSQUITOES. —
MARACOTTO. — A FOREST MARCH. — ANT-BEAR AND
JAGUAR. — A SAND-STORM. — ARRIVAL AT ANGOSTURA.
— A NEGRO GOVERNOR. — THE TOWN DESCRIBED. —
TRADE CARRIED ON BY THE INDIAN TRIBES. —
WHITE INDIANS.

AMONGST these scenes passed our first day on the Orinoco. The setting sun threw a warm shimmer over river and island ; the air was deliciously soft, with just zephyr enough to set the sails to sleep, and to produce a gentle murmuring ripple at the bows, as we sat on deck conversing pleasantly (for Herr von Krohn and his bride had got over their sea sickness) ; and conning the tapirs through the same glass that had been used in the Grand Opera House of Berlin to inspect the beauties of the ballet, and the queens of song, we could see plainly the long snouts and pig-like eyes of this South American representative of the elephant.

We voted the river travelling delightful, and agreed that we should be sorry when our trip was over ; but alas for the instability of human enjoyments ! Within twenty-four hours a change came o'er the spirit of our dreams. We arrived at a special region of the Orinoco which seems to be the paradise of mosquitoes, and the hell of travellers. These insects, of unusual size, and speckled in an ominous and snake-like manner,

issued forth from the bush in millions, and assailed every square inch of exposed skin. They also made their way inside one's clothes and boots, and seemed to be as distinguished for their creeping powers as for their prowess in flying. Moreover, they stung through boots, trowsers, coat, and waistcoat, and drew blood wherever they penetrated. The sailors lay on the deck slapping themselves all night as if for a wager; groans and suppressed exclamations were to be heard from the cabin—the poor bride! Even the dogs uttered dismal and despairing yelps, and ran to and fro shaking themselves. Poor Don Juan had been shaved, and cruelly deprived of the defence which Nature had given him. Never were such mosquitoes seen before or since! The pale moon shone down, beautiful but unsympathising, upon our sufferings. Higher up the river there are no mosquitoes. Here the bush resounds at night with singing insects. Some of them have five notes of the diatonic scale, and having reached the top of their compass, they begin at the lowest note again with monotonous regularity. Of course the fire-flies were flashing in millions through the greenery, and the tree-frogs contributed their music to the concert.

A couple of hundred miles up the river the granite mountains of Venezuela come into sight; the islands become rocky, and the forest is varied with grassy prairies; villages also begin to occur, and canoes and boats are met with. I bought from the Indians some capital fish called here maracotto. The rocks are covered with cactus and aloes, and the beach is of white sand. We landed at one of the islands armed with our rifles, as the captain said we might get some sport. He accompanied us, as did also Herr von Krohn. The

latter was armed with a brand-new rifle, which he had brought with him from Germany, and as he had talked big of his powers as a sharp-shooter, great things were expected of him.

We entered the forest by a narrow and muddy path, and had not gone far before the captain pointed to the fresh tracks of a jaguar; they were so sharply printed that it was evident the animal had passed not many minutes before. I told Herr Krohn that his opportunity would be likely soon to occur, but I am sorry to say that his complexion had undergone a serious change for the worse; it was overspread with a pallor, the much abused rifle quivered suspiciously, and a few minutes afterwards he said he did not feel well and would return to the ship. Deprived of his company the captain and I and two or three of the crew proceeded into the forest, but unfortunately were not successful in falling in with anything worth shooting.

The captain beguiled the tedium of our forest march with tales of sport; amongst other incidents he narrated how on one occasion he saw a jaguar spring across the track and pounce upon some creature in the bush. He then heard a roar of pain, and advanced with rifle at full cock towards the scene of action. The covert was violently agitated, he obtained a glimpse of the jaguar's head, fired, and all was still. On cautiously parting the dense foliage he saw its dead body closely embraced by an ant-bear, which however proved to be also dead, its assailant's long fangs having pierced its throat. It had not died unavenged, for it had first driven its long sharp claws between the ribs of its foe, and held him in its death-grip. The captain stated that he had both hides at home, and kept them as a trophy.



A WHITE SQUALL ON THE ORINOCO

The above is the ant-bear's stock tragedy, the hero of which is a creature about eight feet long, including snout and tail; it has the toughest of hides, covered with stiff, wiry bristles, is very slow in its movements, and cannot run away. Nor can it bite, for it has neither mouth nor teeth.

When suddenly surprised on its travels it curls itself up and shams death. It might be supposed, under the above circumstances, that it would fall an easy prey to the hunter. There are many things in this wide world which it is dangerous to take for granted, and this is one of them. If approached while in its apparent state of suspended animation it will rear itself up, throw its four armlike legs around its assailant, and not only hug him with the force of a vice, but also drive its sharp powerful claws into his body like so many daggers. Their hides are much used for mats, &c., throughout Guiana.

A day or two afterwards we were approaching Angostura. The country had become open, with much stone and rock, coarse grass and patches of shrubs. On the day of our arrival, when we were almost in sight of the town, we were caught in a sand storm. On looking towards the mountains on either side of the river, we noticed masses of inky-black clouds arise from behind them, and meet overhead like a pall; at the same time their bases became hidden by what looked like dense volumes of smoke, but which the captain told us was sand. A schooner a few miles astern of us was observed through the telescope to take in her canvas, but before she could succeed the great mainsail was seen to split and fly out in ribbons, and she nearly capsized. Our captain shouted hasty orders to strike

all sail, and in five minutes nothing but spars and ropes remained for the squall to seize. The columns of sand and the clouds seemed to meet, the mountains were entirely hidden beneath the black obscurity which overhung the river; behind us a white line was seen advancing, it was the foam of the tortured waters. At this moment we were still in calm and sunshine, but as suddenly as if a curtain had been let down the light was eclipsed, the wind pounced upon us with a roar, the air was filled with sand, and we began to tear through the water at a prodigious rate. In fifteen minutes all was over; the sun shone out again, we re-spread our sails, the vanished dinner things were again restored to the cabin top, and we set to work upon the maracotto, potatoes, and potted meats with appetites all the better for the brief excitement.

We soon lost sight of the tattered craft astern of us, whose spars and canvas dangled about her like the feathers of a defeated game-cock.

How like a younker, or a prodigal,
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugged and caressèd by the harlot wind !
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weathered ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggared by the strumpet wind !

SHAKESPEARE, *Merchant of Venice*.

A lovely moonlight night succeeded, and at two o'clock A.M. we reached Angostura, which means "the narrows," for the flood of waters is here forced by the mountains into a channel little more than a mile wide.

The town is thoroughly Spanish—dirty, untidy, with narrow streets, and houses tiled and painted blue, red, and yellow; the windows are barred with iron like

those at Havana. As in all Spanish towns the court-yards were ornamented with shrubs and flowers, which could be seen through the open portals. Beneath the shade of these, Spaniards could be discerned lolling at full length in Panama hats and shirt sleeves, smoking cigars, while dark Spanish women with long black plaits were lounging or doing crochet work in the windows and on the balconies. Negroes with packages on their heads occupy the narrow pavement; and the river banks are covered with the hides of little Orinoco cattle, which are lying there to be sun-dried for export.

I called on the Governor, who evidently had a great deal of African blood in his composition. He assumed a haughty demeanour, and seemed to think that there was an immeasurable distance between us outer-barbarians and himself. I unfortunately was betrayed into a slip of the tongue, and called him "Monsieur" instead of "Excellence." This he did not forgive for the rest of the interview. A negro in authority is insufferable.

The people of Angostura are thoroughly Spanish; they speak in sonorous well-poised phrases, and are distinguished for elaborate courtesy. They entertain the true Spanish contempt for labour, and are characterized by the national readiness to promise everything and perform nothing; not being hampered by over-scrupulous regard for truth. The one principle to which they adhere rigidly, is that of never doing to-day what can possibly be put off till the morrow. There is a good deal of trade going on at Angostura, but it is entirely in the hands of Germans and Americans. The only steam-boats on the river belong to Yankees, while German merchants supply the demand for European goods, and keep the shops furnished; even many of the

savannas on which the cattle are raised for export are in foreign hands. There is no cultivation in the vicinity of the town.

The business quarter, where the merchants reside, is about a mile in length facing the river ; this is dominated by an acropolis reached by seven steep avenues crossed at right angles by streets American fashion. The summit is occupied by a square covering about 10,000 yards, and flanked by Government House, the Cathedral, the Barracks, a prison, and other public buildings. The lower town contains the Custom House and Admiralty, it terminates in a public promenade where the citizens resort and where the young fashionables of both sexes stroll beneath the shade of avenues of trees ; it is the scene of that ancient pastime of love making which survives all changes and disregards longitude, latitude, and temperature. Cupid is truly cosmopolitan !

Many of the merchants' houses are handsome mansions of cut stone.

The only drawback to the healthiness of the city arises from a natural basin of rocks filled annually by the inundation. Subsequently during the dry season its waters slowly evaporate, leaving a residuum of mud and festering rubbish, the parents of fever and malaria. The evil might easily be remedied, but the authorities, with the indolence and indifference so characteristic of the Spanish race, allow it to go on.

The Brazilian Consul, who is a Frenchman, invited me to dine with him. He gave us quite a feast ; champagne, a capon and sweetbreads, occupying the most prominent place in my recollection. We smoked cigars afterwards in the veranda facing the great river and commanding a view of the buildings and fortress on

the opposite side. The climate here is very dry and stimulating, the temperature ranges from 80° to 85°, and at this season of the year no healthier place exists in tropical America than Angostura. The Orinoco is liable to an annual inundation like the Nile ; this takes place between May and August, and the waters rise, I was assured, sixty or seventy feet above low-water level. There were one or two small steam-boats, which during the season of flood ascend the river to a distance of 900 miles. Their object is to collect hides, and they also net a good deal of money by the passenger traffic, for all the families in the interior avail themselves annually of the opportunity of coming to town to do their shopping.

The Indian tribes on the Orinoco and its tributaries carry on a trade in hammocks made of palm fibres, and grasses dyed by a process known to themselves, and often decorated with brilliant feather fringes ; they also freight their canoes with vanilla, gums, puma, jaguar and ant-bear skins, and a very soft pliable kind of cable made from Rio Negro palm fibre, and much valued by ships' captains ; they bring stuffed birds of great beauty and rarity, live monkeys and parrots, and occasionally a young tiger ; they also cultivate patches of the forest, and offer their surplus cassava for sale. It will be seen therefore that the Indians of the Orinoco are unusually industrious ; they are intelligent and physically well developed, and certainly deserve a higher rank in the scale of humanity than is usually assigned to them. They have not yet forgotten the early cruelties of the Spaniards, and are very reserved and suspicious ; nothing will induce them to sleep in the town, nor will they allow their young women to go near it.

I was informed that towards the sources of the Rio Negro there is a tribe of white Indians. Their light complexion is probably due to the high elevation—some 14,000 feet. On the river Meta exist some tribes who cherish such a hostility to Europeans that it is not safe to pass through their territory without a pretty strong escort.

CHAPTER VII.

TRINIDAD.

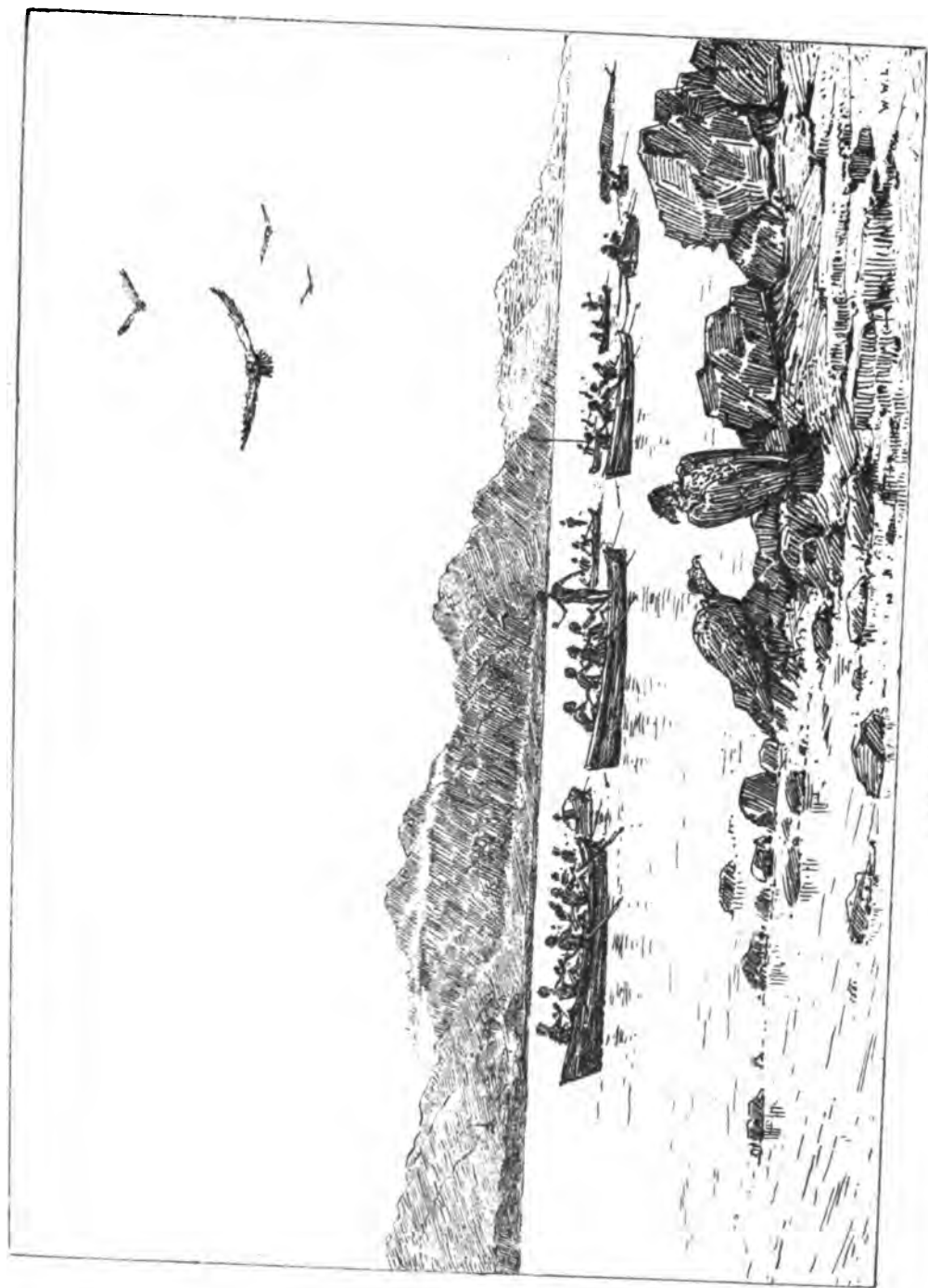
FOREST EXCURSIONS.—GULF OF PARIA.—PORT OF SPAIN.—
CORAL TREES.—“FLOWING BOWLES.”—NEGRO LOVE
OF FINERY.—THE PITCH LAKE.—A GASTRONOMIST.
—ORTOLAN PIE.

AFTER a brief stay at Angostura I took passage in a steamer bound for Trinidad. We followed quite a different branch of the river, called “El Cano de Macareo,” which conducted us into the Gulf of Paria, viâ the Serpent’s Mouth. This was the channel by which Sir Walter Raleigh first penetrated into Venezuela. At that time it was governed by a chief or Inca, reported by the natives to be clad in gold and to use only golden vessels. They called him “The Gilded One,” translated by the Spaniards into “El Dorado.” It was these tales that ultimately lured on the eminent courtier to his doom. Incidentally, however, they contributed to the colonization of the Orinoco region. Dreams of gold have led to a similar result in the case of many another previously unexplored country. No incident of much interest occurred on our return voyage. The scenery is similar to that already described, and the monotony of the trip was only broken by our landing two or three times for a supply of wood to keep the furnaces going. This gave us an opportunity of making excursions into the forest, and shooting some wild turkeys; several

alligators too were wounded. We saw the bullets strike their armour-plated hides, but the reptiles immediately plunged head-foremost into the depths, brandishing their tails defiantly as they disappeared.

On emerging into the Gulf we proceeded along the coast, having Venezuela on the left-hand and Trinidad on the right. The captain pointed out the sharply-defined line between the fresh water of the Orinoco and the ocean brine, the force of the current keeping them separate for a long way seawards, the dividing boundary being clearly visible owing to the sharp contrast of colour. As she crossed it half the ship was thus in fresh water and half in salt. We skirted the promontory of Icique, the south-west point of Trinidad. It is covered with tufts of cocoa palms, and terminates in a succession of detached rocks hollowed out by the action of the surf into arches, caverns and other eccentricities. Our course then lay due north straight across the Gulf to Port of Spain, the approach to which is very striking, the lofty mountains of Cumana being on our left, those behind the town on our right, and the Dragon's Mouth with its islets straight before us. Of the latter I shall have more to tell later on. I may here observe, however, that the south-eastern entrance into the Gulf is called the Serpent's Mouth, and the north-western the Dragon's Mouth.

Port of Spain has broad straight streets and wooden houses, which project over the pavement Spanish fashion. There is a fine fountain in the middle of the main thoroughfare and a splendid hospital; the drainage is shockingly bad—I suppose to ensure a continual supply of patients for that institution. What between



TOWING HOME A WHALE
VENEZUELA COAST.

the stench in the town, and the miasma wafted from the neighbouring swamps, it would decidedly *not* do for a health resort.

Almost immediately behind the town rise ranges of mountains; and at the time of our arrival the coral trees which dotted their sides were in full blossom. This tree, like many others in the tropics, casts its leaves and breaks into blossom before the new foliage shows itself, much like the almond tree, with the difference that it is of gigantic size, and its vast spreading head extends itself some seventy or eighty feet from the ground. The mountain-side thus appeared to be covered with a green robe patterned with scarlet.

On landing, I went to a hotel kept by an Englishman of the name of Bowles. Some of his acquaintance nicknamed him "Flowing Bowles," as a tribute to his thirsty disposition. The arrangements of the hotel itself were most original. In lieu of bedrooms, the architect had provided a dormitory divided into cells by partitions of single canvas screens, which only rose half-way to the ceiling. The negro waiter is civil enough, but one cannot depend upon a word he says; he promises to do everything, but never performs anything. Negroes are extremely inquisitive, and Bowles' factotum was no exception. The canvas partitions were a source of happiness to him, as he was able to ascertain at all hours what the occupants of the different cells were about.

The hillsides in the vicinity of Port of Spain are scored with deep ravines and valleys, and I made many a pleasant excursion on foot and on horse-back along these. One is constantly discovering beautiful views, which occur as a succession of little surprises;

now over the town and the sea ; now over the interminable savanna which extends southwards right across Trinidad ; now towards the Dragon's Mouth entrance and its islands. Of course tropical vegetation always furnishes a rich foreground. One comes unexpectedly upon planters' houses in romantic situations, or upon a knot of negro huts, dirty but picturesque, infested with plenty of little various-coloured pot-bellied imps, entirely innocent of clothing ; their mothers are either squatting in the doorway peeling yams, or toiling up some steep winding path with earthen pitchers poised on their heads, or gossiping volubly with much action in knots of threes and fours. They are great chatter-boxes ; even if alone they soliloquize aloud, narrating all their quarrels with their neighbours, or their grievances, criticising their acquaintance, or cracking jokes to themselves, at which they laugh heartily. Alone or amongst gossips their tongues never rest.

They are fond of finery, which is fortunate for the planters, for it is their sole inducement to instigate their husbands to work, and earn the price of a new silk gown or a headkerchief, or parasol, or earrings, or bracelets. However, sometimes the husbands get over the difficulty by stealing the required articles, and the police outside the shops often arrest any darkies whom they see coming out with goods not wrapped up in paper. I have witnessed this myself. On the other hand, I have seen a negro pay twenty-five shillings in cash for a Panama hat, though they rarely work more than four days in the week, so easily is money obtained here by a very moderate amount of labour. There are many cocoa plantations right and left as one ascends these valleys. The cocoa shrubs are the size of laurel

bushes, with glossy leaves, and with the flowers and fruit attached to the trunks and large branches. They are always planted under the shade of tall trees. Higher up are coffee plantations, but the greater part of the mountain sides is still clothed with virgin forest.

I took passage one day by a steamer bound for the Pitch Lake, which is situated near Point Brea, and beyond the town of St. Fernando, the sea-port at which the island produce is shipped for England. The lake is about a mile from Point Brea, and one follows up the course of a *river of pitch* to reach it. The lake itself is of irregular form, a mile in circumference, and scored with cracks full of water. Its surface seems solid, but if one stands still for a few moments, one soon begins to sink; a stone placed on the surface will have disappeared by next morning. There is in the centre a tract about fifty or sixty feet in diameter, where hot pitch is constantly welling up in a liquid state. Through the pitch bubbles a fountain charged with sulphuretted hydrogen, and tasting like rotten eggs. At its western extremity the asphalte overflows its banks, and travels at about the same rate as a glacier towards the sea. The vegetation around the lake is wild-looking and stunted. I found a peculiar fern rooted in the decaying pitch near the edges. There are a few small islands scattered over its surface covered with trees. I was told a story of a traveller having ridden across the lake to one of these, and made his pony fast to an overhanging branch. He then proceeded to eat his dinner, smoke cigars and botanize. Towards sunset he returned to retrieve his steed, but only found the bridle, the unfortunate beast and the bit having disappeared beneath the treacherous surface.

Our party consisted of a Hindoo doctor, and the commander of a ship that had brought coolies from India, as also an English tourist who appeared to have come out for the purpose of gastronomic exploration—his one object in life apparently being to taste all the productions of the countries he visited. At Trinidad he had set his heart on living on turtle and other tropical luxuries, including the many fruits. Great therefore was his disgust at being fed on board the steamer on tough Angostura beef and watery Irish potatoes.

Close by there is a swamp frequented by a little animal called "the mangrove dog," of which I vainly endeavoured to procure a skin; also by a large tailless rat exceeding a rabbit in size. This animal is considered a great delicacy, and is called a Lap. It is said to be the most delicious of all four-footed game. My gastronomic fellow traveller longed to make experience of this delicacy, and he lamented to me in the most pathetic terms the difficulty there was of tasting anything the country produced. He appeared to have encountered greater obstacles in pursuit of the science of gastronomy than Humboldt did in determining the geology and flora of South America! What made his disappointments more cruel on this occasion was that he had been reading a treatise all the way to the Pitch Lake on these dainties. This persevering gastronomist immediately stopped a peasant whom we met, and overhauled his basket in the hopes of finding a Lap, but he was disappointed, and I heard him adjuring the man by the hope of large reward to procure him one. His unceasing devotion to science nearly cost us our passage, for it was already late, and we were in the act of refusing a neighbouring planter's offer of luncheon when our friend heard him

say something about ortolan pie. This was irresistible. Ortolans were quite as much an institution of the country as Laps, so he voted that we should accept the invitation. We ate three ortolans apiece, and then by dint of riding at full gallop just managed to catch the steamer as she was starting. On the voyage back we had reason to be grateful to our host for the pie, which made us independent of those horrible Angostura steaks. It certainly does appear a perverse arrangement that, while turtle, fish, game, excellent vegetables and delicious fruits are so abundant and so cheap, the colonists should abandon all these good things to the negroes, and condemn themselves to a monotonous diet of tough and expensive beef. If they give you fruit at all it will be dried French plums and almonds, while first-rate pine-apples may be had round the corner for three halfpence apiece !

CHAPTER VIII.

TRINIDAD—*continued.*

VISIT TO A WHALE-FISHING ESTABLISHMENT.—MY HOST.—
WHALE-FLESH.—FISHING EXPEDITION.—SHARKS.—AN
EXCITING INCIDENT.—A ROMANTIC BATH.—MY HOST
MEETS WITH AN ACCIDENT.—THE WONDERFUL BEL-
LOWS.—VAMPIRES.

WHILE in Trinidad, I was invited by the owner of a whale-fishing establishment at some islands near the mouth of the Gulf of Paria to stay with him. The islands are about twenty-five miles distant from Port of Spain. Their industry consists in wrecking, and in capturing the tropical whale which frequents these waters. I was lured into accepting the invitation by his promising me plenty of exciting sport. The island in question appears to be the summit of a submerged mountain, which rises abruptly from the ocean depths; the sides are very steep, and there is deep water all round close to shore, with no strand or level space on any part. The owner of the whaling establishment is a Frenchman; his house is close to the sea—a rambling wooden building with no casements in the windows, but with very wide eaves intended to serve as verandas on both sides of the house. My host is in person short, stout, broad-shouldered, with a square bronze face full of good humour. He has divided his mansion into two great rooms, one containing an immense

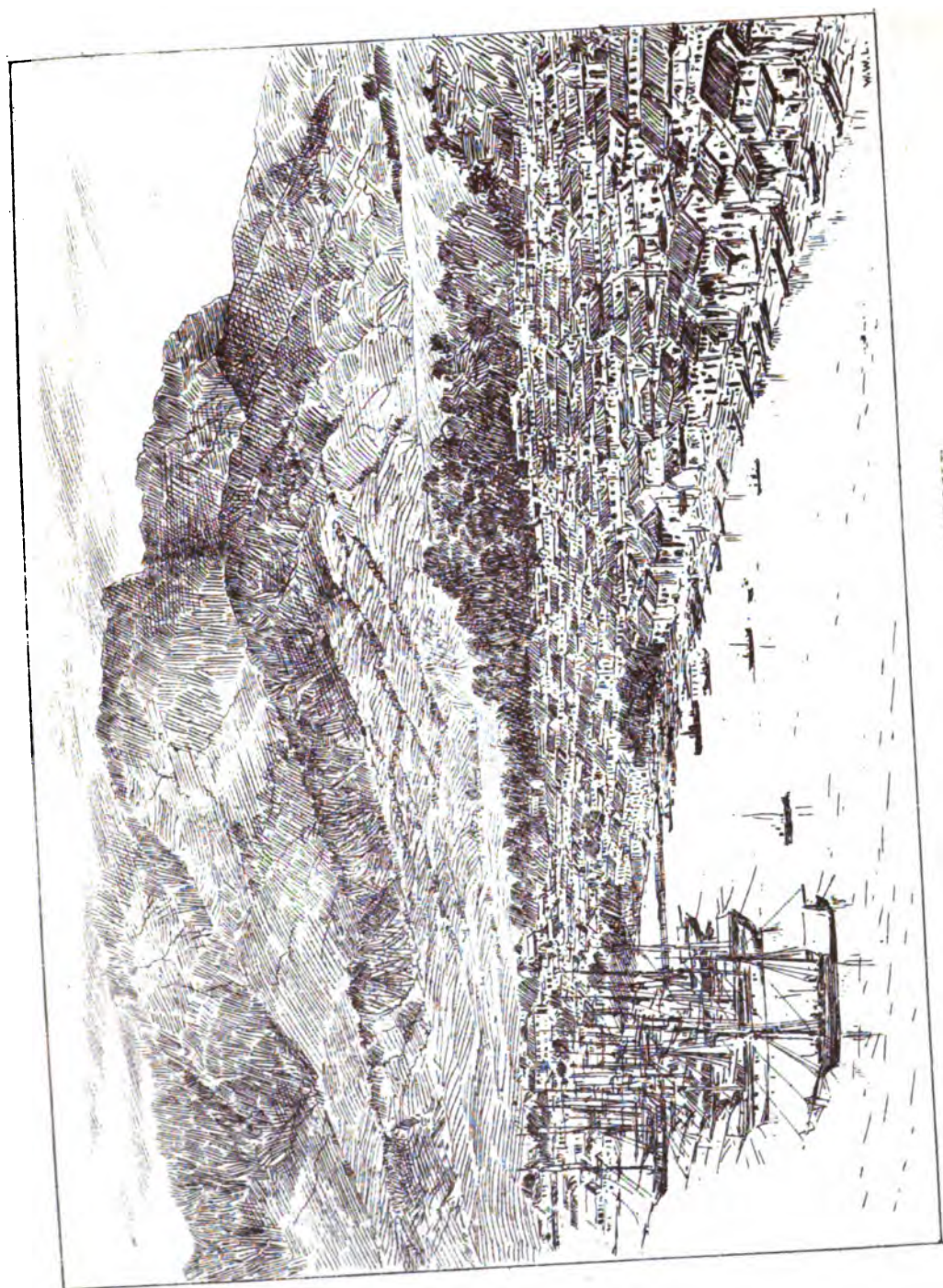
four-post bedstead, and serving the purpose of a store-room for cassava, flour, and various other things; the other is drawing-room, dining-room, workshop, armoury and hen-house, all combined; harpoons hang on the walls, hens lay eggs in the window-sills, which are furnished with straw as a hint and inducement. The floor is occupied by three old card-tables, three chairs, various boxes and a large dog, which has grown preposterously fat upon whale blubber. This animal is a living testimony to the efficacy of fish oil in cutaneous disease, being the only European dog that I have seen in these climates free from mange. There are also two cats, looking very lady-like and refined amid the prevailing roughness. Everything is redolent of whale oil. Bottles of this odoriferous article stand in the corners; the floor of course is stained all over with it, zephyrs fresh from the setting sun waft the perfume from the boiling house on their sleepy wings. My host's clothes smell of oil, the dog smells of oil, his cook smells *especially* strong of oil, for reasons which will presently appear.

When we sat down to table my host explained, with some signs of a blush, that he had only one fork in the establishment; I thereupon produced a knife, fork and spoon from my canteen. This difficulty having been got over, he proceeded to explain that his store of bread was exhausted, and that they had finished the last of it only that very day. He pointed to a calabash full of cassava flour, and hoped I could make shift with that. I soon discovered that a number of other articles had given out "that very day."

Our supper consisted of lobster, whale-steaks and fresh fish. I had brought a ham with me in case of emergency—this he took possession of at once with-

out ceremony, and attacked it so fiercely, that it manifestly had no chance of surviving until the apprehended emergency occurred. He made his supper off this and the cassava flour, leaving the fish, lobster, and whale-steaks to me. The latter resembled lean beef, and had no fishy flavour whatever. The fact is, that the whale carries all his fat outside him, and that the flesh underneath is particularly lean. Whale meat might be salted down and used as salt beef, and it is a great pity that something cannot be done to avoid the terrible waste which takes place every time a whale is killed. One of these vast carcasses contains more beef than a whole drove of oxen, but unfortunately it is always abandoned to the sharks and vultures, except the small quantity that may be consumed by the fishermen. The cassava flour is put on one's plate and moistened with water, when it swells up, and forms a tolerable substitute for bread.

I have already had occasion to explain how it is used in South America by the Indians and others. It is made into thin wafers resembling oat cake, which is much the best way of preparing it. After dinner it appeared that another article had given out "that very day," viz., my host's cigars. He looked hard at me as he made this sad statement, and it was fortunate that I had a cigar case in my pocket. The cook, a particularly dusky negress, now entered, put into a calabash the remnants of the whale beef, adding the fish, the lobster, and the fragments of cassava, and mashed them all together; she then poured from a jug upon this mess a current of fresh-drawn whale oil, sat down in a corner with the calabash in her lap, and began to hand-feed herself, cramming into her mouth as much of this



ST PIERRE MARTINIQUE.

unctuous diet as it would hold at one time, after which she proceeded to set her grinders to work in a manner that was slow but sure. One would have thought such diet more suitable for the Arctic Circle than for the Tropics. She subsequently proceeded to promote digestion with a short clay pipe, and home-grown tobacco.

Next day I went out shooting, and as the hill side is very steep and the sun hot, I entrusted my shot-bag and powder flask to a negro. I ought to have known better. We had not been in the bush ten minutes before I missed my black gillie, and retracing my steps caught him in the act of emptying my pouch into the pocket of another negro—a confederate. I suppose the shot had also given out that very day! He did not appear to think that this little episode need occasion any coolness between us.

I may mention that I had brought from the Orinoco an extremely curious animal, a kind of tree porcupine. I had left its cage carefully closed, but the negroes' curiosity gave it a chance of escape, which it quickly availed itself of. The negroes are very mischievous, and their mischief often takes a malicious turn. One night on the Orinoco, while lying awake on my air mattress, I caught a black sailor in the act of applying the lighted end of his cigar to it, in the charitable hope that it would explode.

The shore of the little bay upon which my host's dwelling is situated is lined with dead sharks. When a whale is towed in by the boats legions of these monsters follow the carcase, taking bites out of it "*à discretion*." The whale is made fast to a double crane overhanging the sea; overhead circle hundreds of great vultures,

waiting for their turn, or tearing at the entrails of the dead sharks. The boats are moored to the carcase, and their crews cut off the blubber in strips.

The next morning we started on a fishing expedition in nine boats, having heard that some whales had been sighted in the offing. On reaching the scene of operations the boats scattered in different directions, so as to observe any fish that might pass in or out of the Gulf. At last a signal was hoisted on one of the fleet, and all the others made sail to join it. We carried a swivel gun pivoted in the bow, loaded with an explosive conical iron shell. Before our boat arrived the whale had been harpooned, and had dived. We followed in the direction of his flight, and presently he came to the surface within range. The captain lost no time in firing his blunderbuss, aiming behind the fin; the monster again dived, but soon floated lifeless, the waves around being stained with his blood. The whole fleet then attached lines to the carcase, and towed it home in triumph.

The crews, who are all negroes, are entitled to half the profits of every whale killed. While we were towing our prize homewards, the sharks were busily engaged in tearing at its sides, and in this way they stole a good deal of the blubber before we had reached the timber frame from which the carcase was to be suspended. Cables were passed round it, and it was hoisted partly out of the water; the sailors strapped on their feet what the Frenchman called "crampons," an iron contrivance armed with spikes to enable them to maintain their footing upon the whale's back, and proceeded to detach the blubber in long strips with their cutlass-shaped knives. The sharks fought with them for almost

every morsel, and the negroes retaliated by occasionally plunging their knives into the bodies of the monsters, a contretemps which did not appear to spoil their appetites in the least !

After the blubber had been detached, it was taken to the boiling house, divided into small pieces, and put into iron tanks for extraction of oil. It must not be supposed that blubber is a soft material ; on the contrary, it is tough elastic gristle, the cells of which are full of oil. In appearance it resembles raw bacon-fat, but is firmer in consistency. It has no taste whatever of train oil, the disagreeable flavour of which arises from rancidity, and does not exist in the fresh blubber. The boiling sets free the oil, which is skimmed off the surface and stored in large bottles. The tropical whale, which belongs to the sperm family, differs considerably from the Greenland variety, being much smaller, its mouth, too, is armed with teeth instead of whalebone. After the blubber had been all stripped off, the vultures came to claim their perquisites, and the carcass was soon covered with hundreds of these birds. When approached they rose like a cloud, and the uproar made by such a multitude of enormous wings was quite deafening ; altogether it was a memorable experience. The shore of this curious island was strewn with large barnacles, which infest the skin of the whale ; they become detached after death, and are cast up on shore by the waves in large numbers. Of course portions of skeletons abound, and amongst this uncouth medley are scattered cotton trees well furnished with pods, from which the cotton fibre was hanging in abundance, in long skeins.

The following morning the bay was full of dead and

dying sharks ; their end was not peace, for the crews got hold of them, and cut out their livers, for the sake of the oil, leaving them to float away, still struggling.

The entrance to the Gulf of Paria is rendered dangerous by sunken rocks, and by the treacherous currents which make these islands the paradise of wreckers.

My host descanted on these perilous conditions with much satisfaction, and piously observed that God had been very good to him that season, and had provided several wrecks. There are certainly two ways of regarding everything ! I soon had a vivid illustration of how well deserved was the evil reputation which he awarded to the Dragon's Mouth. One day we were fishing near its entrance. I shall never forget that scene. On the right and left, two splendid headlands rose perpendicularly out of the sea, presenting 300 feet of sheer precipice ; they were but a mile apart, and from their height appeared much less. A heavy swell rolled in, breaking in masses of spray, as if bent upon undermining the twin giants, and hoarsely thundering forth its purpose at their feet. A line-of-battle ship (the *Indus*) was coming on at a stately pace with every sail set, topsails, royals, sky-scrapers and all, and studding sails below and aloft ; in her train followed a war brig, a war steamer, and a large American ship, all except the steamer under a press of canvas. A rapid current composed of the Gulf Stream, reinforced by the Orinoco flood, was racing through the narrow channel, and meeting them in full force, rendered every sail they could raise, necessary to enable them to stem it. The wind was easterly, and blew across the course. On they came, breasting the current until they got under lee of the headland. The American had kept too far to

windward, and too close under the mountains; the wind suddenly deserted her sails, and an eddy bore her rapidly towards the iron-bound cliffs. It was a moment of intense excitement; already her yards seemed touching the rocks.

"If no breeze rises," exclaimed my host, "she is lost;" but at the very moment when her destruction seemed inevitable, a puff of wind came providentially from the very face of the granite wall; she heeled slightly over to it, and moved slowly out into mid-channel.

Meanwhile, the brig had nearly got through the dangerous passage, but just as she had braced her yards sharp so as to catch the wind, an eddy caught her, and she spun round like a top and bore down broadside on upon the American, who had just escaped the rocks, and now was close to her. "Wear ship, wear ship!" was the cry, and in an instant the crews swarmed into the boats, which came down from the davits with a run, just in time to avoid being crushed between the two vessels. They scrambled out by bows and stern, spars were shoved forward to fend off and break the force of the collision—they bent like fishing-rods! The steamer now came bustling up (the *Indus* had already got through), but the wind falling the current was beginning to march off with her, and the struggle between nature's forces and man's art seemed likely to end awkwardly for the latter, when steam stepped in and secured the victory. The *Styx* sent a cable-end on board the discomfited ship, and towed her off in triumph, leaving the American and the brig to get out of their scrape as best they could. It was a pretty sight to see the *Indus* take in her sails; in a few minutes

her 12,000 yards of canvas had disappeared; nothing but blue jackets were to be seen on her yards, and her spars were as bare as those of the steamer—it seemed like magic. My host, his two sons, and myself, were the only spectators of this exciting incident, one not every day to be witnessed with such scenery for a setting.

I have only spoken of the headlands, but on the left the string of islands looked like a continuous mountain chain, terminating in the peaks above Cumana 5,000 feet high, while on our right the Trinidad range extended as far as the eye could see; the channel before us seemed the only link between the Gulf and the ocean * * * * What forces were at work in that narrow channel—the mightiest ocean current in alliance with one of the mightiest river floods rushing together on their appointed course. The mouths of the Orinoco are fully 100 miles off, yet so decidedly does its flood make itself felt at the mouth of the Gulf of Paria that in the rainy season it is difficult to enter except with a leading wind. I do not think that any of those vessels will choose that channel again. My host told me that I might have remained years there without witnessing such a spectacle.

The *Indus* is Admiral Houston Stewart's flag-ship, and he came to Trinidad to assist at the wedding of his nephew, young Shaw Stewart, who is to marry the Attorney-General's daughter. This event became the occasion for a number of balls and dinners at Port of Spain.

We started one morning for a cave which exists on a neighbouring island. It was beautifully hung with glittering stalactites, which gave it the effect of being

supported on white marble arches and columns. In one place these rose direct out of the azure depths, which lay as motionless as a mirror around them. The vaulted roof, fretted, Moorish fashion, was prettily reflected in its bright surface, and looking down into its recesses, the rocky floor could be plainly seen four fathoms below. I undressed for a dip, swimming in and out among the Gothic transepts and aisles. The water was tepid. A more romantic bath can scarcely be imagined, and the Greeks of old would at once have assigned it to the nymphs, or pointed it out as the grotto where Diana took her morning plunge. It was partly lighted from the entrance, and partly by a torch which we had brought with us.

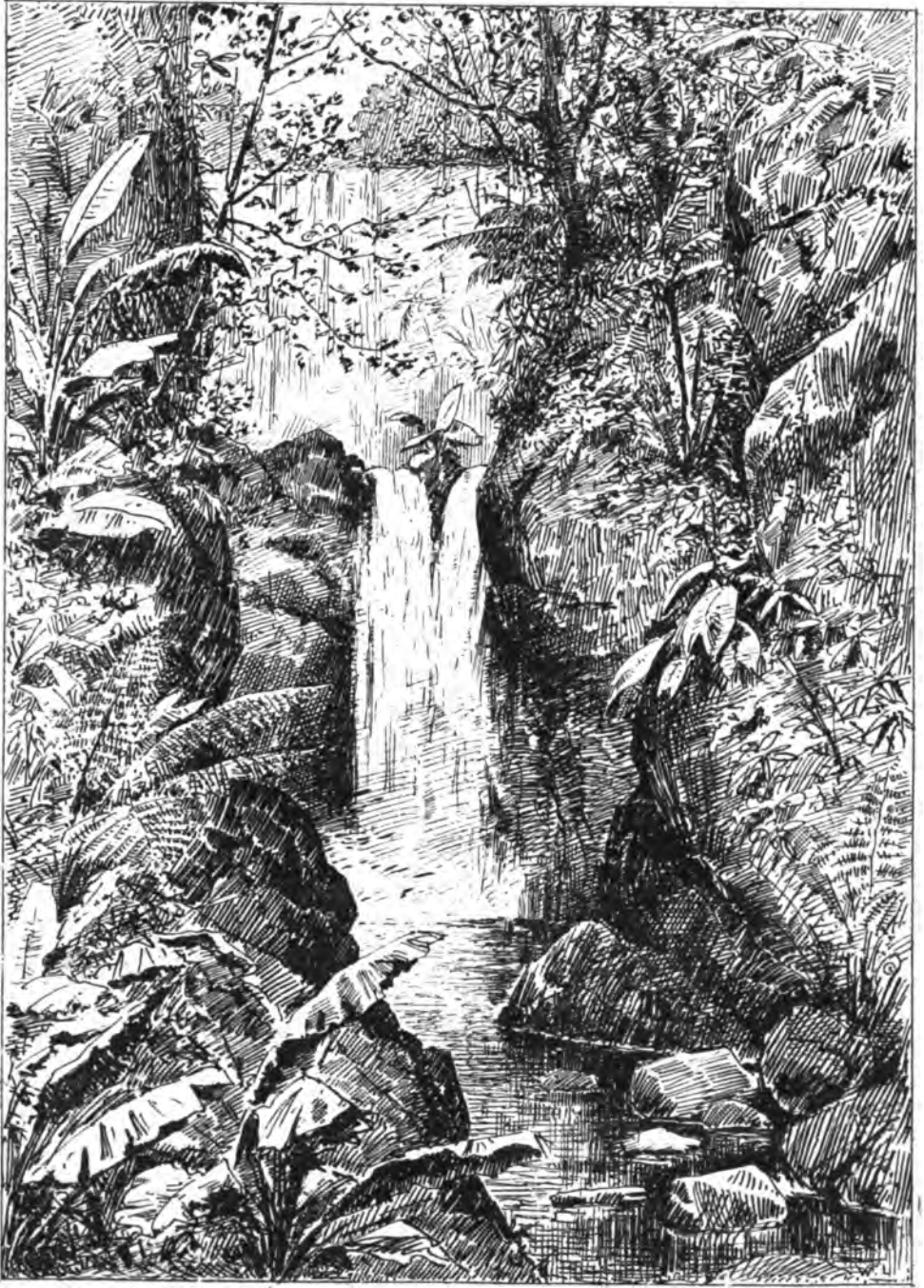
Trinidad is a very lovely island, and a nearer acquaintance with its bay confirms me in the opinion that, classical associations apart, it eclipses the Bay of Naples, possessing even a more fascinating "Grotta Azura" than that which is so attractive at Capri.

My host was a Roman Catholic, and one day while busy carpentering under a calabash tree, a large calabash weighing ten pounds fell and struck him on the crown, knocking him head over heels—the wonder is that it did not fracture his skull. As soon as he had recovered a little from this accolade he hastened to the house and poured out for himself a big bumper of brandy; that finished he fixed a candle in a brass candlestick, lighted and placed it before a statue of the Virgin, which stood in a bricked-up window in the bedroom. The candles were provided specially as votive offerings, for the establishment used nothing but whale oil for illuminating purposes. The statue was coloured blue and gold, and decorated besides with

flowers; the niche contained in addition three prayer books. I regret to say that my host suffered for the rest of the day from a very bad head-ache, the combined effect of the bump and the bumper! If his cranium had been as hard as his cook's he would have suffered no inconvenience from the calabash. One evening I watched her lighting a fire. She had a number of sticks by her side, which she took one after the other, and broke to the required length *across her woolly pate*. The sticks being too thick to kindle easily, I lent her the air-bed bellows and showed her how to work it.

The boats' crews gathered round as much astonished as a parcel of Fiji savages might have been; and indeed they looked wild enough as the dancing flames played upon their half-naked forms and rugged features. As for the cook, she remained squatting on the ground, lost in wonder and admiration. The operation over, the magic instrument was handed from one to the other, and examined by the fire-light; they pushed back the valve, and tried to get a glimpse of the inside, expecting apparently to find it stuffed with complicated machinery. It was fortunate for me that they did not steal it as a fetich!

I have already described mine host's bedroom. The four-poster was the only bed in the house, and I found that I would have to share it with him. It was entirely bare of bed-clothes, and it seems that the custom of the place is to turn in "all standing." I, however, infringed this rule to the extent of pulling off my boots, which I subsequently had reason to repent, for I had not been long asleep when I was awoke by the fluttering past me of some creature, and I then became aware



MY MORNING BATH BAINS DES PITONS.

that several vampires were careering about the room, and, as I did not relish the idea of having an artesian well sunk in my toe, I got up and replaced the boots. The night after we captured the whale, I was aroused by a violent blow from Monsieur Tardieu, my host ; I shook him and asked what he meant by it, but he only rubbed his eyes, and muttered, in a tone savouring of disappointment at its unreality, that he was dreaming that he had harpooned a whale ; evidently regarding me as a very poor substitute ! It will thus be seen, that the nights on these islands of the blessed are as fertile of incident as the days. However, I quoted to myself by way of consolation the Latin passage : "*Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit,*" and as a matter of fact, whatever drawbacks may have existed, the time I spent in this singular locality was full of interest and curious experiences, the free wild life, the splendid scenery, the novelty and varied adventures making amends for much.

CHAPTER IX.

MARTINIQUE.

GRENADA.—ST. VINCENT.—BARBADOES.—ARRIVAL AT MARTINIQUE.—ST. PIERRE.—A TRIP INTO THE INTERIOR.—A TUG OF WAR.—FORT DE FRANCE.—TREE-FERNS.—THE BAINS DES PITONS.—MOUNTAIN CRABS.—A TOUR ON HORSEBACK.—TRINITY.—A MOUNTAIN PASS.—A COUNTRY SEAT.—ST. THOMAS.

GRENADA was the first island at which after leaving Trinidad I had an opportunity of going on shore. It consists of a wild assemblage of mountains and valleys, clad of course in rich tropical verdure; no level country is to be seen but on the hill-sides. The sugar plantations appear as bright green patches which contrast well with the sombre tints of its natural forest.

There are a few coffee and cocoa plantations, the latter distinguishable by the scarlet-flowering *bois immortel* trees, which are always planted with cocoa to furnish shade. The alliance between these two trees is so invariable that the Spaniards have christened it "Madre di Cacao." Although it is a large forest tree it belongs to the bean tribe; its flowers closely resemble the scarlet-runner, and its leaves are identical with the foliage of that esteemed vegetable. The trunk on the other hand is often ten feet in circumference and very lofty, and must have been the

original beanstalk by means of which Jack climbed up into cloudland. The town is situated on a beautiful bay, but it is not worthy of its lovely situation, its mean houses and narrow irregular streets being full of abominable stench.

After leaving Grenada we passed a string of rocks and islets until we reached St. Vincent. This colony is the head-quarters of arrowroot cultivation. Its mountain scenery is very grand. The town straggles along the shore of a noble crescent-shaped bay, so closely hemmed in by the mountains that there seems scarcely to be room for it. Most of the West India islands rise from the sea at such a steep angle that the largest steamer can cruise along within biscuit toss of the rocks, and the waves retain the ultramarine colour indicative of very deep water. There is a theory that they are in fact the mountain summits of a submerged continent; such a chain would correspond with the Andes on the Pacific side of the enormous Gulf.

From St. Vincent we steered nearly due east for Barbadoes, which is out of the line, and clearly does not belong to the same geological system. We remained there from noon till 6 P.M., so had ample time to land and explore both town and country. There is nothing picturesque about it, and as I shall have to return to it later on, I shall postpone any detailed description till then.

Next morning the noble outlines of the Martinique mountains came into view, and in due time we landed at its metropolis, St. Pierre. The town is situated at the foot of a volcano, the summit of which is concealed by a perpetual pall of smoke. I put up here at the

Hôtel des Bains, where I sojourned for some days, during which I was sustained on colonial fare at Paris prices.

Having inspected the bill and been stung by the total, I remonstrated, whereupon mine host struck an attitude and retorted, "Monsieur! on ne vient pas ici pour faire des petites économies." This withering sarcasm crushed out of me all spirit of resistance—I sadly counted out the dollars and departed. But I am anticipating. St. Pierre is the only town I have visited in the far South free from stench—a consummation due to the fact that on both sides of each street there are streams running at mill-race speed, and sweeping away with them all refuse. The citizens have had the wisdom to utilize thus the abundant waters furnished by the cloud-capped mountains which frown grimly overhead, for St. Pierre is squeezed in between the sea and the before-mentioned volcano. Its chief attractions are some charming excursions in the neighbourhood, its picturesque situation and beautiful environs.

During my stay I heard of some chalybeate springs in the mountainous interior, which were said to be extremely tonic and bracing; and that a water-cure establishment existed, offering tolerable accommodation. Always glad of the chance of lighting upon something original, I resolved to pay it a visit. The route was viâ Fort de France, the garrison headquarters of the island, to be reached by coasting steamer. Before starting, I resolved to effect a long postponed reform and get my hair cut. The intention was praiseworthy, but the result disastrous. A mulatto barber visited the hotel, and to him I entrusted the task. I did not discover until too late that he was

half blind, with the result that he reduced my wig nearly to baldness, and met my passionate reproaches with a drawling "Mais, Monsieur, ça pousse vite!"

While on board the steamer awaiting the start, I watched with much amusement a truly French attempt to embark a horse. Going down to the sea in ships was evidently not to his taste. He set all four hoofs firmly on the pier, and seemed to be under the impression that he was taking part in a tug of war; the more the crew pulled seawards, the more did his stern hang back towards the land. I thought the sailors would have hauled his head off, but they were worsted in the struggle. They then blindfolded him, but with no better success; they next tried to back him in, tugging at his tail with such energy that I expected to see that come off in their hands; still in vain. They then desisted for a few moments in order to have an opportunity of abusing the beast in French; they poured out a torrent of uncomplimentary language—"sacré cochon," "accursed pig," being the mildest epithet applied; but he was impervious to invective, and was finally thrown, tied together neck and heels, and *carried* on board. I never saw even a circus-horse show more lively sport.

We had a very pleasant two hours' trip, coasting along often within biscuit toss of the rocks; a cool breeze fanned our faces and crisped the deep blue water; mountain and valley, village and country-house, plantation and forest passed before our eyes like a moving panorama. The lady-passengers were dressed in Parisian summer costumes, the gentlemen wore Panama hats, white trowsers, and black coats, and conversed with all the earnest animation and vehement gesticulation where-

with Frenchmen impart an air of importance to the veriest trifles. I drew near an orator who was holding passionately forth to a select circle, and who seemed to be pouring out his very soul to his audience. What was the all-engrossing topic? A tobacconist had sold him bad cigars!

Ultimately we disembarked at Fort de France. The town occupies a most picturesque position; sapphire-blue sea in front, backed by lofty mountains. Conspicuous amongst these are the peaks called the Pitons, which rise to a height of 5,000 ft., and are scored with deep ravines, descending to the coast. Far up in one of these glens, and just under the tallest peak, the baths of the Pitons are situated.

Fort de France possesses a Place d'Armes nearly a mile square. Its sides are lined with magnificent sand-box trees, surrounded by a broad promenade, and adorned in the centre with a statue of the Empress Josephine. This square is washed on two sides by the sea, and has the ships and the glittering bay before it. On the land side are cafés and good stone houses. While here I called upon one of my former fellow travellers, who invited me to dine with him, and also got me an invitation to a grand ball which was to take place at St. Pierre the following week. I met his secretary at dinner, whom I had also encountered previously in my wanderings.

Next day I started for the mountains on horseback, escorted by the proprietor of the Baths. He had provided himself with a stout grey, leaving to me the only other occupant of his stud, a dilapidated beast of the colour known as flea-bitten. Only three of its legs were fit for service, one of the hind fetlocks being prac-

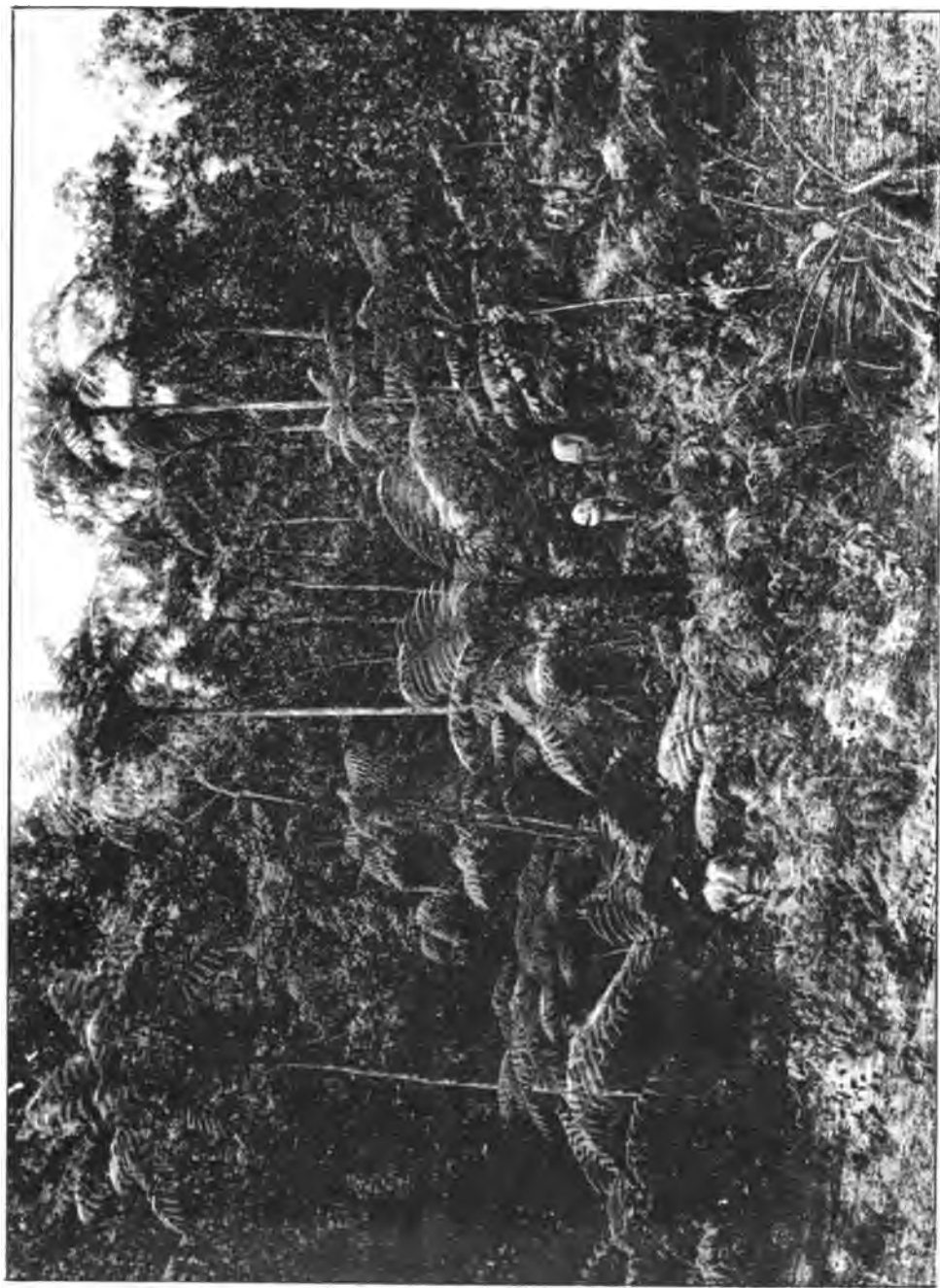
tically disabled by a weakness which was particularly inconvenient, as most of our trip was up hill, where a hind leg could least be spared. As we advanced the valleys grew narrower and the ridges steeper and more broken; forest usurped the place of cultivation, the scenery became exceedingly wild, and more fantastic than anything that Salvator Rosa ever painted. The views looking back over the bay were lovely, while right before us rose the sugar-loaf cones of the Pitons, covered to the summits with forests that no human foot has ever trodden. The barren glaciers of Mont Blanc are less invincible to man than the formidable vegetation that clothes those mountain sides. To the botanist these forests are full of interest; unfortunately they are also full of serpents. I thought I had seen some splendid tree-ferns in the neighbourhood of St. Pierre, but they were dwarfs and pigmies as compared to the ferns of the Pitons, their stature often attaining forty feet. In some of the gorges where there is little daylight and much damp, the forest consists almost entirely of these most graceful of all trees.

The road was overhung by a mixture of bamboos and ferns, with creeping grasses fifteen feet long, and mosses four feet in length, and branching to a width of two feet. I would compare the valley in which the baths are situated to a basin; the ridges rise all round so precipitously that the first rays of the morning sun do not reach the establishment until two hours after the rest of the world has had the benefit of them; the evenings are curtailed in like proportion. Our only neighbours are trees; the baths are absolutely isolated in the midst of as wild a forest as can be imagined. It can only be penetrated by following up the course of torrents, forming a very rough

path along which one may pick one's way from stone to stone in the twilight formed by a matted mass of vegetation overhead. I annex the portrait of one of these glens sketched on the spot by myself, subsequently developed by an artistic friend. It forms not so much a pathway as a staircase—and that of the roughest. An abundance of orchids, ferns, and mosses hang from the branches, as well as the vegetable cordage I have before described, varying from the thickness of a quill to that of a ship's cable. These form supports for many climbing plants.

Amongst others, I noticed the *Bignonia venusta*, with clusters of deep yellow blossoms, and a great variety of convolvulus. Some of the trees are so smothered beneath this last as to present the appearance of a stack of greenery enamelled with flowers.

The establishment here consists of a collection of log houses; each patient has one wooden cell to sleep in and another as a day room for writing, drawing, dining, and receiving his friends. The water is strongly chalybeate, and issues from a spring on the side of the hill at a temperature of 96°. It resembles that of Schwalbach, and is so saturated with iron that the sheet in which one dries oneself immediately assumes a fine orange tint. This is the carnival season, consequently the only patients just now resident are a few invalid soldiers, but I was told that a month later it would be crowded. Its altitude ensures a comparatively cool climate—65° at night and from 70° to 74° by day. Opposite my door are coffee and lemon trees, and a splendid mango in full flower, which causes it to be resorted to by dozens of humming birds, so that I can study their habits at my leisure. They are the grace-



TREE FERNS

fullest little creatures, and so confiding that they will flutter about a cluster of blossoms within reach of one's hand ; they are very quarrelsome, dashing at each other furiously whenever an intruder comes within their diggings. How can such minute little beauties harbour such passions ? At night the cicadas and tree frogs begin their concert beneath a chandelier of fire-flies. There is one variety—the bull-frog—which makes a noise like a blacksmith's hammer ; no one would ever suspect that sounds so formidable could proceed from a frog's throat. Others make a noise like a watchman's rattle, others chirp like London sparrows.

The thunder of a neighbouring cataract forms a grand bass to the whole concert, and deep amongst the pitch-dark recesses of the forest the fire-flies flash to and fro like thousands of electric sparks gleaming in every direction.

One of the strangest denizens of these mountains are the crabs. We are accustomed to think of crabs only in conjunction with seaweed, but here they are quite at home amid mountain and forest ; they also climb the trees. One meets scores of them in the course of a morning walk. Their presence is announced by a rustling among the leaves ; one prepares for a serpent, when out sidles an orange-coloured crustacean with his arms akimbo. He is of an aggressive disposition, so up go two great yellow claws in a threatening attitude, like a pugilist tucking up his sleeves and clenching his fists. If the river is near, he tumbles into it *tant bien que mal*, and shuffles away under the nearest rock. These crabs are quite amphibious : they spend one season of the year in the forest, but at another they make a point of taking their families to the sea-

side. They would be as unwilling as a London Mother-familias to miss their annual trip to salt water; regardless of distance they make their way over rocks, under brambles, and through forest to reach the beach. In doing this they march sociably together in troops.

While sojourning at the Bain des Pitons I occupied some of my time in collecting and drying ferns. My French fellow-patients were much exercised in mind about this pursuit. They failed to comprehend what earthly motive could inspire me to take the trouble of scrambling up water-courses and over hill and down dale in quest of such rubbish. At last an invalid officer—a kind of deputation from the rest—asked me point blank, *Est-ce que vous faites de tisane avec ça?* “Do you make tea of that stuff?”

This was quite a pendant to the perplexity of the worthy Dutchmen of Surinam as to my collections of birds, which they referred to as small fowl.

When I succeeded in making my military friends comprehend that I was actually going to take these dried weeds to England, they watched me with much the same air of concern with which they might have watched a lunatic decorating his hair with straws!

My daily routine was as follows:—At 6 A.M. a worthy old negress brings me *café au lait*. I then start on an exploring and botanizing expedition till ten; then mineral baths and promenades. Then *déjeuner* consisting of an *omelette*, *pommes de terre Lyonnais*, bananas and Bordeaux. Then a gossip with an amusing old French lady—a stroll and a cigar with some of my male acquaintances, followed by more scrambles through the woods, or visits to plantations, or sketching expeditions.

After leaving this quaint health resort I returned *viâ*

Fort de France to St. Pierre, and started thence on a tour on horseback across the island.

The road lay through mountain scenery wilder if possible than that of the Pitons, varied, however, occasionally by richly cultivated valleys. One in particular was specially beautiful ; the floor being studded with a number of round-topped hills, on the summits of which were perched pretty wooden chalets surrounded with palms, plantains, bread-fruit, and gardens ; above frowned the wild mountain peaks clothed in dark magnolia forests, their sides scored with ravines and crevasses. The mountain forms were alpine, but the glaciers were replaced by forests, which occupied slopes so steep that they seemed to threaten an avalanche of trees—a great contrast to the eternal death that reigns about the Wetterhorn, the Shreckhorn and other Swiss peaks. This happy valley passed, the road continued to ascend until one was once more buried amongst the tree-fern glens of the Pitons ; mountain torrents roared far below, on one side heavy masses of lianes and creepers drooped from the Magnolia branches overhead, and feathery bamboos shot up their bright green varnished stems, piercing the foliage in search of sun-light. At one point the passage seemed barred by a pyramidal precipice too steep for trees to find a footing, but partly veiled by festoons of lianes that extended to immense lengths down its face, for no other purpose apparently but to serve as supports for orchids and mosses.

So complete was the solitude that I felt almost like the last man ; not a living thing did I meet until I had got a good way on the other side of the Pass. The view of Trinity Bay looking down upon it from above is very beautiful, it resembles an engraving I have seen of

the Bay of Panama. It is full of coral reefs, discernible beneath the water in milk-white patches, so that as one descends the zigzag road, one may observe all the channels between the reefs picked out in deep blue. There is a fine strand of white coral sand ; it abounds in large conch shells. The town of Trinity is of wood ; many of the stores are kept by negroes, who seemed to be driving a brisk trade in salt fish, cigars, masks for the carnival, drugs, cassava biscuits, &c. &c. There are plenty of fishing boats on the strand ; sugar-cane crops cover the hill-sides and slope down to the beach, where the root fibres must often take a sip of sea water. Cane fields though rich in aspect are monotonous, but this is relieved by clumps of palms, patches of cassava, by cottages and gardens, and by the background of mountains.

I put up at Trinity at a store kept by a Frenchwoman. I had a large airy room, clean bed-linen, clean towels and a very obliging hostess. At the back of the store was a verandah supported on arches, between which green curtains were hung. The verandah contained a sofa, table, chairs, sideboard, and a large press with glass doors, in which divers good things were kept ; there was besides a wooden frame on four legs, lined with clay and filled with charcoal. The latter was lighted on my arrival, and mine hostess with its assistance made soup, an omelette, and a ragout of potatoes and steaks. I watched the proceedings with a deep interest which will be appreciated by those who have ridden for eight hours over mountains at a foot's pace without tasting a morsel. The kitchen was both neat and effective.

My next day's ride lay between the cliffs and the sea—

a series of charming bays and promontories, the latter bright green with canes; and descending in white, red, and yellow precipices, they stood out in picturesque contrast with the ultramarine surface of the Caribbean Sea.

On returning to the town I entered a store kept by a Frenchman; and asked for a glass of wine. He invited me into his back parlour, furnished the requested restorative, and would not hear of remuneration. How popular would English wine-merchants become if they conducted their business on the same hospitable principle! The road still followed the coast, and I stopped for the night at La Grande Anse, a bourg 25 miles from Trinity. At the door sat a Hindu coolie with his feet covered. While my room was preparing, I sat in the entrance contemplatively smoking a cigar. The Oriental addressed me in an unknown tongue, and withdrawing the cloth pointed to his feet covered with sores, overrun with ants. He burst into tears, and put his hands together in a supplicating attitude. He sometimes brushed away the ants lightly with the cloth, but *never killed one*, it being contrary to the dictates of the Brahminical religion to destroy the life even of an insect. Having taken counsel with myself, I went to a drug store, dissolved some camphor in sweet oil, and made my patient anoint his feet; the ants immediately fled to return no more—they cannot bear camphor. During my South American wanderings I had found this drug invaluable for keeping these little pests at bay. Nothing was safe from them that they could reach, but a ring drawn on the floor with a lump of camphor was as a magic circle which they could not pass, and constitutes an impregnable fortress within which one's goods

were secure. As soon as the Hindu perceived the success of the prescription, he touched his forehead and made other signs of gratitude.

Next morning I observed a regiment of horses and mules ridden by naked blacks to the beach,—they were drawn up between the two surf lines and seemed to enjoy their bath. They and their ebony centaurs formed a picturesque group. I regretted that they did not remain long enough to have their portraits taken. Among them figured my own Rosinante.

Soon after leaving La Grande Anse I rounded the north-east point of the island. The cultivation is very rich. I saw cane fields there with crops tall enough to have hidden a regiment of Life-Guards, helmet, plume, and all. I entered on horseback, and the canes rose more than two feet above man and horse. Sometimes the face of the country was traversed by crevasses, three hundred feet deep, the opposing cliffs looking as if they would dove-tail exactly could some giant power bring them together again. Down the face of these precipices tumbled a wild tangle of foliage and flowers in cataracts, broader and higher than the Falls of Niagara. On the right sixty miles off lay Dominica, an assemblage of blue peaks rising out of a far bluer sea. On the left a perfect mob of mountain peaks, mostly cloud-capped, pierced the sky. Between two of these lay the route by a pass several thousand feet above sea level. Before commencing the ascent my nag made an obstinate stand at a roadside hostelry, where a party who had just crossed were refreshing themselves with claret and omelettes. Had I realized the impending experience I should have yielded to the hints of the sagacious quadruped; as it was I did not know that I should

have to cross the mountains at all. I attributed the beast's *entêtement* to envy of the animals who were grinding away at bamboo tops under a mango tree in front of the hostelry. I convinced him with some difficulty by means of switch and spur of the unreasonableness of his desires, and he proceeded *demissis auriculis* up the hill. Soon coffee and cocoa took the place of canes, to be replaced in their turn by forest; my back was towards the sea, and my face towards the dark peaks—it was *toujours excelsior*; the forest trees dwindled, the wind blew cold and damp, mosses clung to the branches in long festoons, ferns lined the road-side, and I viewed with a greedy covetous eye several that I had not in my collection. Still higher and higher the trees became bushes, and the wind became northern, the surrounding scenery more bleak and savage. At last at a turn of the road what a view met my eyes! Before me fantastic peaks wreathed in clouds, far below the deep blue sea, the Atlantic on the east, the Gulf on the west. Close overhead, clouds drifted along the mountain sides; far below, extended like a map, was a mosaic of rich valleys, plantations, patches of wood, palm clumps, villages, gardens, all looking very liliputian through the clear air. A small cottage stood at the summit of the pass, a hospice for hungry travellers. I ordered refreshments for self and beast, and went to explore the flora. After breakfast I showed the hostess and her two sons how to cultivate radishes, and told her of various European vegetables which would sell well at St. Pierre, and could be raised in the cool mountain climate.

The country below through which I passed was highly cultivated—as highly as model farms in a mid-

land county of England; populous, and abounding in flowers and fruit, but I will spare my readers a detailed description.

Before leaving Martinique I visited a chateau belonging to an old established Martinique family of the name of Acier de Pompignon. The old lady who is the reigning representative assembles her direct descendants about her every year on her name's day; last year eighty-five sat round the family table! The heir apparent is one of eleven brothers. The settlers of Martinique almost always have large families, and cases of deformity are nearly unknown, amongst either blacks or whites. The Pompignons received me hospitably, and showed me over their gardens, grounds, and farm buildings, the latter quite a little town, including labourers' cottages. The chateau would have done credit to an old English baronetcy. It was of stone, with large well-furnished rooms, and having nothing un-European about it, not even a verandah. Terraces, fountains, fish ponds, statues, shady groves, flower and fruit gardens made up a very delightful *tout ensemble*. The views from every part of the grounds were most romantic, including sea and land, river, mountain, and plain. Near the house I observed some extra solid strongly built arches. My cicerone told me that they were refuges for occasions of hurricanes and earthquakes.

I left Martinique with regret, having seen more and more to admire in it to the very last day of my stay, and having also received much kindness from the hospitable colonists.

I subsequently landed at Dominica, Porto Rico, and St. Thomas. The latter deserves notice from its curious formation. Volcanic cones form the outworks;



THE PITONS, MARTINIQUE.



behind these a wall of mountain seems to oppose the bar of an iron-bound coast. As one approaches, however, there comes suddenly into view an opening through which one glides into a charming little bay embosomed amidst steep hills. The island appears to consist of the rim of an extinct volcano; the steep sides form a circle a mile and a half in diameter, broken only at one point—the gap through which the ocean long ago rushed headlong into its fiery bosom when it was extinguished. In the basin thus formed many ships ride at anchor. Opposite the entrance stands the town, built on low volcanic cones. Its walls are all manner of bright colours, surmounted with red roofs; amongst these wave tall cocoa palms; little boats of no particular shape, the very curs of nautical creation, are plied lazily to and fro by negro boatmen.

While here I crossed the ridge by which the harbour is land-locked, and reached the sea-shore on the western side of the island in eighty minutes. The view down into the ship-studded basin was interesting and attractive from the summit of the pass.

In concluding this section of my West Indian experiences I may observe that the trip through the Archipelago is a most delightful one. The traveller touches at one lovely island after another. No sooner does one of these tropical gems fade on the horizon than another rises into view ahead, and I can imagine no more enjoyable region for yachting in the winter months than the Caribbean Sea.

CHAPTER X.

FLORIDA.

TRIP TO THE EVERGLADES.—ST. JAMES ON THE GULF.—
TARPON FISHING.—PUNTA RASSA.—SHIPPING CATTLE.
—FORT MYERS.—PROFESSIONAL HUNTERS.—A WEIRD
CEMETERY.—THE EVERGLADES.—SEMINOLE INDIANS.
—LAKE OCHEECHOBEE.—KISSIMMEE RIVER.

My readers may not be sorry to know something of the wild southern regions of Florida, which are rarely, if ever, visited by the tourist, and differ totally from the hackneyed districts which are flooded every winter with visitors from the North. These fugitives from frost and fog are under the delusion that when they have seen Jacksonville, Winter Park, and perhaps the Indian River they know all about Florida. The extensive, imperfectly explored region bounded by the Kaloosahatchie River to the north and extending nearly to Key West differs entirely from the sections described by writers on the orange-grove portion of the peninsula. I do not know that I can better introduce the former to the knowledge of my readers than by describing a tour which we made there some years ago.

We proceeded by rail from Tampa to Punta Gorda, on Charlotte Harbour, where we met an American gentleman who had just come down through the Lakes viâ Kaloosahatchie River to Fort Myers in his steam yacht. He informed us that he had no further use for her

that season, and most generously placed her at our disposal, together with a letter of introduction to the Captain. Thus armed we made our way by steamer to a newly-founded winter resort called "St. James on the Gulf." The route to it was most romantic; passing through numberless islands covered with stately forests, and across a vast bay practically land-locked by the coral reefs which separate it from the Gulf of Mexico. The cruise had all the charm of inland lake navigation, the mirror-like waters being sheltered from every wind that blows. We stayed some days at St. James's City, where the principal attraction is Tarpon fishing, and boating. The Tarpon is a fish which sometimes attains 250 pounds weight, and of course requires powerful tackle; it is angled for with heavy rods armed with massive reels and very strong lines, and furnishes exciting sport. The people staying at the Hotel talked of nothing else but their Tarpon adventures, which seemed to have such a fascination for them that they devoted themselves to this pursuit from sunrise to sunset. One gentleman narrated a most mortifying experience which had that day befallen him. He was in the act of reeling in an exceptionally fine tarpon after playing it for hours, and had just raised it above water, when a shark made a snap and bit off all except the head. The last-named fragment of the unfortunate fish, however, looked so handsome that he thought he would secure it as a trophy, and was proceeding to haul it up when the same shark, presumably, grabbed it, and dragging tackle and all overboard disappeared. It is at least to be hoped that this sea pirate was punished by an attack of indigestion.

We hired a small yacht to convey us from St. James's

City to Fort Myers, touching at Punta Rassa, a port from which cattle are shipped to Cuba and Key West. One of these shipments was taking place at the time of our arrival, and a most exciting scene it proved. The cattle are practically wild; and it requires the utmost skill of experienced cow-boys to get them on board. Strong barricades are constructed leading to the gangway of the schooner which is to carry this living freight. The cattle, of course, make desperate efforts to escape, and frequently charge the herdsmen, who are mounted on wiry little steeds well used to the work. Punta Rassa is at the mouth of Kaloosahatchie River, a name which, I may here mention, signifies in the Indian language "beautiful water." It is a charming cruise up the river from Punta Rassa to Fort Myers, a place with very wild surroundings, and which constituted an important strategic point in the Indian war. We were entertained here by a rather romantic young couple, who called their house an hotel, but treated us entirely on the footing of private guests. They were most attentive, and we parted from them with regret. Having delivered our letter of introduction to the captain of the *Hamilton Distin*, for that was the name of the American gentleman's yacht, we embarked next day, and commenced our voyage into the interior.

Fort Myers has been selected by Mr. Edison for a winter resort; he has a villa there, supplied, as a matter of course, with the electric light, much to the amazement of the cow-boys who resort thither from all parts of South Florida.

Above this town the river banks are confined by rocks which hem it in to the right and left, and are covered with

picturesque vegetation overhanging its waters. There are numerous palms draped with festoons of creepers, conspicuous amongst which is the moon-flower, a night-blooming plant, with blossoms resembling stephanotis, but very much larger, being four inches across. They close at noon.

The Kaloosahatchie is occasionally visited by parties of professional hunters, who collect for sale the skins of plumage birds, racoons, opossums, and alligators. As regards the latter they wound many more than they bag. An alligator dies hard: nothing but a ball through the heart or the brain will kill him on the spot; when hit anywhere else he simply dives as if nothing had happened, and is lost to the hunter. Sooner or later his wounds prove fatal; we often saw their carcasses floating down the river belly upwards, and clawing the air with arm-like limbs stiffened in the attitude of their death agony. They are, of course, much swollen, looking as if they had died of tympanitis. Generally a couple of vultures are perched upon these ghastly gondolas, vainly trying to drive their beaks through the cuirass of yellowish white scales with which all saurian stomachs are plated. At landing places the grinning skulls and skeletons of these reptiles, sometimes of immense size, are to be seen; the relics of the carcasses which the hunters have stripped of their hides. These lie scattered usually under some great evergreen oak-tree, and present a grimly curious picture, overhung as they are by giant branches from which depends a sombre grey drapery of *Tillandsias*, drooping in tresses many yards long in mournful sympathy with the scene of death and decay beneath. A more weird cemetery it would be hard to picture. It

would form a suitable feature for Dante's "Inferno," or for the incantation scene in "Der Freischütz."

Rich strata of phosphate of lime (as I ascertained by analysis) cropped out among the rocks which formed the river channel. We emerged at last from the forest, and there opened before us what looked like extensive prairies covered with tall grass. On a nearer approach however it turned out to be really a vast expanse of water hidden beneath saw-grass, which in some places attains a height of twenty feet. This was our first view of what is known as the Everglades of Florida, a region which appears to be neither water nor land. It was with great difficulty that the Captain kept the channel, and we had to sound continually, as land-marks are few, and it was nearly his first trip to that part of the country. We ran aground many times, and in some places had literally to dig our way through. The crew were constantly in the water, and as moccasin snakes were numerous, it seemed a miracle that none of them were bitten. The moccasins are water-serpents, and swim like eels, but here and there where land showed above the surface in the shape of islets we saw these reptiles basking in the sun, their small venomous eyes glittering with malice as we passed.

It must not be supposed that the scene was one unbroken plain of saw-grass, for wherever dry land rose above the surface of the swamp dense forests occupied it; in fact there was a background of woodland throughout. I may mention that the portion of the Everglades we were traversing was in about lat. 26° 30'. One feature of this extraordinary region is that islands occur covered with forests of hickory, evergreen oak, cypress, magnolia

and other trees, interspersed with many palms and festooned with vines and creepers of every kind. These forests form a tangled mass, which can only be penetrated by cutting one's way through. Some of the islands are inhabited by Seminole Indians, to whom alone the intricate labyrinths by which it is possible to traverse these tracts are known. They live by fishing and hunting, and travel through the Everglades in their dug-out canoes. These are fashioned out of enormous cypress trees, which abound in the swamps. The Indians wear a peculiar dress, including a curious turban consisting of cloth encircled with a silver hoop by which it is kept together. The women are adorned with a profusion of beads strung round their necks; we saw one squaw who was decorated with no less than thirty pounds weight of these ornaments. The men are often tall and handsome, in contrast with their wives, whose features are of the Kalmuck type.

The Seminoles once occupied all Florida, but were driven back by the white man, not without much fighting, until now they have retreated into the deep recesses of the Everglades, where the conditions of life are such that the white man does not care to follow them. It is a curious thing that they still have negro slaves. One of these was brought in a canoe by an Indian chief to Fort Myers. The Indian was warned on arrival that by American law all slaves were now free; his reply was, "My slave no free," and he strode away in deep dudgeon, and started down the river in his canoe, carrying off his African chattel with him. They frequently make their way as far north as Kissimmee for the purpose of bartering skins for whiskey and gunpowder. They are considered to be beyond the

pale of citizenship, and have not the protection of American law, the reason being that they refused to migrate to the territories assigned for the surviving tribes.

On one occasion while at a sheep-farm near Lake Kissimmee, a party of Seminoles landed at our camp. We gave them some provisions, and they sat and smoked. While employed in this soothing operation some lambs and sheep approached. The eyes of the chief immediately began to glisten, and we heard him muttering to himself, "Take big sheep, *bad*,—little lamb *no harm*." The next morning one or two fleecy skins were found, alas! untenanted, the late occupants having probably migrated to the Indian camp kettle the previous evening.

We expended two or three days in fighting our way through the amphibious region above described, with the result that our supply of fuel became exhausted, and we were reduced to the necessity of burning bedsteads and all the spare spars and planking of the yacht to keep up steam. At last we reached the drainage canal which has lately been excavated as an outlet for the great lake Ocheechobee. This aqueduct is seven miles in length, perfectly straight, and hemmed in by a dense growth of sawgrass six yards high, forming impenetrable walls to the right and left. Between these rushes a deep and swift flood, so powerful that even with the aid of anchors and cables it was literally inch by inch that we won our way against it. The waters are full of fish, and these creatures, unaccustomed to "the resources of civilization," were so frightened by the paddles that in their terror they jumped on board in rapid succession; the work of securing them caused

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much excitement, for unless seized immediately they leaped back into their own element, not liking the menacing aspect of our negro cook. Some of these fish were as large as salmon, and we caught many more than the ship's company could consume.

At last we emerged on the great lake, and fortunately for us there was a tract of forest close by from which we secured a sufficient supply of fuel to carry us across its vast expanse.

Ocheechobee is nearly circular, and forty-five miles in diameter. At the southern end dense jungle occurs in which custard-apple trees and wild plantains are numerous. These forests alternate with tracts of saw-grass; the latter occur when water is uppermost, the former when land (I do not say *dry* land) is in the ascendant.

The point at which we reached the inland sea was nearly opposite Observation Island. It was growing dusk, and the captain made fast for the night to the bank of the drainage canal. Next morning the sun rose grandly over the vast expanse of waters; only sea and sky were visible towards the far side of the lake; indeed even in the centre one is altogether out of sight of land, its width being, as I said before, forty-five miles. As soon as steam was raised we started northwards. While proceeding, the western bank grew more and more indistinct, until at last nothing but the tops of the great forest trees were visible.

After steaming uninterruptedly for four hours we arrived at the mouth of the Kissimmee river, which is, I should think, the most crooked stream in the world. It makes its way through vast swamps covered with water-lilies and beautiful blue flowers, the name of which

is not known to me. We saw many alligators, some of them swimming in mid stream, others floundering through the marsh weeds which fringed the banks right and left. In the foreground throughout was a surface of swamp of varying width, behind that grassy prairies, on which numerous cattle were to be seen, and behind that again a dark wall of forest. The turns in the course of the river were so sharp that often after fighting our way through dense masses of vegetation and morass for an hour or two we found ourselves at the next bend within a few minutes walk of the loop at which we began. In this manner we weaved our way backwards and forwards monotonously for two or three days, occasionally meeting with a solitary settler's house. These settlers are called "crackers" in the slang of the country, and many of them are of Spanish origin, have the swarthy colouring of that race, and retain their Spanish names to this day.

As regards the background of forest above referred to it consists of pine woods. These are characterized by one peculiarity which deserves mention, and that is the palmettos which everywhere form the undergrowth. They are intrinsically graceful members of the palm family. A London nurseryman would charge a guinea apiece for such plants for decorative purposes. Travellers new to the country begin by admiring them, and even babble of importing select specimens; but their first excursion into the woods terminates all such enthusiasm, and forces them to the conclusion that they are malignant vegetables. They form a dense under-covert sometimes only two or three feet high, but often double that. The saw-palmetto is armed with minute hooked spines closely set along the leaf stems. If the

unfortunate pedestrian has ventured amongst them in summer trousers, suitable to the climate, they are soon perforated with little rents and holes, and converted into pulp only fit for paper-making. The surface of his skin also becomes diversified with scratches as innumerable as if he had spent half an hour in a sackful of enraged cats. This first stern lesson teaches him the necessity of wearing leather leggings or high boots on occasion of his next forest stroll.

Natives traverse the woods on horseback or in buggies (waggonettes with hickory wheels) ; in the last case progress is made in a succession of jumps and bumps over palmetto stumps. After a few hours of this treatment novices, not to the manner born, feel as if every joint in their bodies was dislocated. But their sensations are further varied by the hardness with which a Florida settler charges sapling trees. Taking the chance of their giving way, he aims the pole of the vehicle straight at the stem, so that one horse passes on each side. The stem usually bends and is borne down by the weight of the buggy ; in that case one feels a grinding grating below which sets one's teeth on edge. Sometimes, however, a vigorous young pine will get the best of it and heave up carriage, passengers, and all ; then one feels as if amongst Atlantic breakers, and one's impressions defy analysis.

I have referred to the various sounds that characterize the Florida wilderness at night, but the daytime also has its orchestra, so much so that it was possible to guess the hour by the particular songsters who were performing at the moment. The most musical of all is the mocking bird, whose song often resembles that of the nightingale. He has, however, a trick of mimick-

ing other birds, and can even be trained to sing a tune.

Another note often heard in the Floridian wilds is "Whip-poor-Will," or more accurately "Whip-poor-Me." In the day-time there were troops of birds with black plumage and crimson wing-covers who persistently cried "Corpo di Dio," with a distinctness that sounded profane. The earliest voice heard from the feathered world is that of the whooping-crane, whose gruff tones were effective as an alarm clock at daybreak. This bird stands nearly five feet high. He is very wary and difficult to shoot.

We spent many weeks on the prairie very happily, leading a wild, independent life. During our stay we did our own cooking and washing, obtaining fish and wild fowl from the lake, and other game on shore, as well as wild turkeys and venison from some of our neighbours in the pine woods. When I say neighbours I refer to settlers who lived eight or ten miles off; we had none nearer.

The prairie in the dry season is delightful. One can gallop across it for miles, the grass at that time being comparatively short.

CHAPTER XI.

FLORIDA—*continued*.

PRAIRIE FIRES.—ENCOUNTER WITH A PRAIRIE BULL.—
RATTLESNAKES. — WILD FOWL. — PELICANS. — LAKE
KISSIMMEE.

AMONGST the incidents of South Florida travel are prairie fires ; these originate in the distant pine woods, where the cowboys ignite the covert to destroy the palmettos, and keep the forest open so that they can ride through it. The devouring element creeps forward slowly until it reaches a tract of long dry grass at the edge of the pines ; upon this it pounces with the suddenness of an explosion, and when favoured by the wind, races across the open plains with a terrific roar never to be forgotten.

We witnessed several of these catastrophes from the safe standpoint of the steamer's deck. The fire demon came down with a furious rush to the water's edge, and we felt his hot breath, but he could not get at us. In revenge he half stifled us with smoke and smuts.

After night-fall the whole prairie seems alight. A dense canopy of smoke hangs over it, which is illuminated with a lurid glare from below, for after the first fierce conflagration has run its course, the embers continue smouldering. Every tuft of palmetto, every collection of bushes remains aglow, and the pine woods in the background present the aspect of a gleaming

wall of fire. The scene would furnish a good ideal for a fancy picture of the infernal regions. One benefit results from this wholesale destruction—hundreds of rattlesnakes are roasted alive, and the baleful vermin are thus rendered scarce.

The herds of cattle on the prairie are practically wild, and usually very timid, going off at full gallop when one gets within a quarter of a mile of them; occasionally, however, the bulls are aggressive. I was once crossing the prairie, gun in hand, charged with number five shot, when I came across a herd of these beasts in some long grass. The cows, as usual, bolted, but the bull faced round, and began staring at me; he then stamped, and I saw at once that he meant mischief. He walked slowly forwards, stopped and stamped again. I looked round to see whether there was a tree at hand, alas! there was nothing but the prairie, not even a palmetto bush, and I knew it would be useless to run. I had no alternative but to stand my ground. He lowered his head and charged, and when about ten yards from me I levelled, aiming between his horns; he pulled up on receiving the contents of the right barrel and shook his head, evidently not liking the resulting sensations. He then turned his flank towards me, and I at once gave him the second barrel in the hollow behind the ribs, where no bones protected his vitals; upon this he went off at full gallop, and was soon lost to sight. The next day I found his carcass at the edge of the forest amongst some shrubs. He had apparently bled to death from the flank wound.

One occasionally encounters rattlesnakes on the prairie, but not often. My first experience of these

reptiles occurred on this wise. I was shooting quail, as they call the small partridge which frequents the plains, and while walking through the grass I was suddenly startled by a noise like an alarm clock running down. Instantly guessing what it was I wheeled round, and saw a rattlesnake coiled close to me on the point of striking. It was an affair of moments; there was not time to bring the gun to my shoulder, so I fired from my hip, and blew the reptile's head to pieces. To my surprise he slowly uncoiled himself and proceeded to crawl away to a distance of several yards; he then stopped as if dead. I pulled out my knife, intent on securing his rattle as a trophy, but no sooner had I taken hold of it than snatching it violently out of my hand, he moved it as far as he could from me. He was five feet six inches in length, and as thick as one's arm. I killed five rattlesnakes in all. They are slow in their movements except when they strike, which they only do when coiled; they always strike straight before them and not upwards, so that a sportsman is perfectly safe, provided he wears india-rubber boots, for the fangs will not pass through these, or if they do the venom is left behind.

The rattlesnake will seldom or never attack unless provoked, either by being trodden on, or by passing too close to him, and then he always considerably warns one by sounding the danger signal of his rattle, which is peculiarly startling, especially when one is alone amidst the solitude of the prairie. The bite is not necessarily fatal. The most successful remedy seems to be whiskey. The rationale of its application is as follows:—the venom operates by depressing the action of the heart to the point of extinction, and the object

of taking alcohol is to keep up the action of the heart artificially, and long enough for the effect of the venom to pass off. For this purpose it should be taken in small and frequently repeated doses. Fatal accidents are comparatively rare; the children of settlers, who generally run about bare-footed, are never or very rarely bitten—in fact no instance of death from snake-bite came to my notice during many months' residence in the wilds of Florida. The vitality of this reptile is something extraordinary. I was walking with a friend when we suddenly encountered one of them slowly crossing our path at a few yards distance. He immediately fired and cut the reptile in two; nevertheless, the portion with the head attached tried to coil itself, and appeared mad with rage, but there was not enough body attached to the head to coil, and he fell over every time he attempted to get into position for striking.

The lakes and rivers in the far south of Florida abound in wild fowl of every description. There are large numbers of plumage birds, such as flamingoes and egrets, and one very peculiar species called the snake bird. It has an enormously long neck, terminating in a very small head scarcely thicker than the neck; it has a beak resembling a heron's, and lives entirely in the swamps. Another bird that occurs frequently is the pelican. I once landed on an island in the Indian River which the pelicans had made their home. The whole surface was covered with their nests, consisting of conical mounds, on the summits of which sat the matrons of the community, either hatching their eggs or feeding their young; beside each nest was a pile of fish brought there in the capacious pouches of the parents as a provision for their families. The sitting



ENCOUNTER WITH A PRAIRIE BULL, FLORIDA.

birds would not leave their nests, and allowed me to come close to them, thus proving their devotion for their offspring. I took care, however, to keep out of striking distance. A negro cabin-boy who accompanied me was not so cautious. He was fired by an ambition to secure a pelican, and seizing one of them by the neck dragged her off her eggs. His triumph was short-lived; with beak and talons she reduced his clothes to ribbons, and scored his legs so that the blood ran down in streams, and he lost no time in letting go his hold. He suffered even more from the chaff of the crew afterwards than from his wounds, and returned to the boat much damaged and crestfallen. We could have filled the boat with pelicans had we cared to shoot them. Those that were not on their nests were circling around us overhead in thousands. I am sorry to say that the pelican community are very defective in their sanitary arrangements: what with decaying fish and other filth this island was the most ill-smelling locality I ever visited.

Pelicans in the nursery stage of their existence are the most hideous of living things. All mouth, stomach, and grey fluff. Their only rivals for the palm of ugliness are young otters, whose aspect is truly diabolical. Once when attended by an Irish gillie we came upon a couple of otter kittens under a furze bush near the river. Paddy dragged one out by the nape of the neck, held it up to view, and crossed himself. "What have you got there, Pat?" I inquired. "Begorra, yer honour," he exclaimed, "I believe it's the Divil," and with that he crossed himself again, hastily dropping the supposed scion of Satan. There are plenty of otters on the Kissimmee river; they are much

larger than the European variety, and have beautiful fur.

We passed through the Kissimmee River into Lake Kissimmee, a sheet of water about fourteen miles long by seven wide and containing a large island of 3,000 acres abounding in game, and separated from the main land by a narrow channel.

It was opposite this island that we effected our landing, and the manner of our *début* on the prairie was on this wise. The shore of Lake Kissimmee is fringed with a ridge of white sand, the steamer drew up within a hundred yards of this bank and landed us about two hours before sunset, together with a few sheets of corrugated iron, some spars of timber and a quantity of tinned provisions; she then steamed away in the distance, and we were left on a very lone shore indeed, to shift as best we could. We set up the iron sheets tent-fashion like a house of cards, collected Spanish moss upon which we made our beds, and so retired for the night. All would have gone well had not a gale set in. This, however, blew with such violence that it was with difficulty we kept the hair on our heads, and it scattered our worldly goods in all directions. Next day we set to work and built a more substantial residence under a clump of evergreen oaks on an Indian mound near the lake. I may mention that we resided here for three or four months, and however much we had to rough it, I can speak in the most favourable terms of the healthiness of the prairies. Although exposed to great vicissitudes of heat and cold we never had a pain or ache during our entire sojourn, and I look back with wonder to the appetites we enjoyed. Our party was four in number, and a stock item

in our daily breakfast menu was a dish of sixteen poached eggs, all and every one of which we consumed. We obtained these from a store some miles distant, which we reached in a flat-bottomed boat which we had brought with us. It had masts and sails which in Florida parlance were sharpie rigged, an equipment peculiarly suited to the Florida waters, as it enables a boat to sail nearer the wind than any other I know. She was also provided with centre-board, like all craft used on these shallow waters.

While encamped on Lake Kissimmee the water-level became lower than had ever been remembered by the oldest inhabitant, which enabled us to collect a number of flint arrow and spear-heads, dating back to no one knows how far. I may mention that flint is a material that does not occur in Florida, but flint of exactly the same character does occur in Tennessee, where Indian mounds are found containing necklaces of Florida shells. It therefore appears that at some remote period a traffic existed between Tennessee and Florida, in which the shells of the latter were exchanged with inhabitants of the former for flint weapons.

As illustrating life in these primitive wilds, I may mention an incident which a member of my family witnessed. I was away at the moment, but subsequently visited the premises, and saw the signs of the fray. It was Christmas time, and a dance was organized in honour of the season. This was attended by the neighbouring settlers, their wives and families, for there are no hired nurses, and the children cannot be left at home. One of the guests became tipsy, and insisted on entering the room set apart for the women and children, I believe in consequence of one of the

ladies having refused to dance with him in his then condition. He entered brandishing a knife, and cut open the dress of one of the ladies. The young men who followed witnessing this insult forcibly expelled him. He attempted to re-enter, but one of them said, "If you don't stop I'll fire," at the same time presenting a shot-gun. The desperado ripped open with his knife the wire-gauze screen of one of the windows, and was immediately fired upon and fell dead on the spot. This of course put an end to the festivities; the men hurriedly elected a jury and extemporised a coroner as president. The verdict found ran as follows:—That the deceased had come by his death "from some cause unknown." A hole was dug under the pines, and there he was deposited—the latest victim of peach brandy.

Apropos of this tragedy I think it due to the Florida ranchmen or cow-boys, as they are there called, that if they have many sins they also have some good qualities. They are not so devoid of religious feeling as might be supposed. They will travel long distances to attend a casual camp-service held by vagrant ministers of religion, who sometimes penetrate to the wild regions where the ranchmen live. One Sunday afternoon we were reading the service and lessons near our camp, when a couple of mounted cow-boys observed us. They immediately joined the congregation, took off their hats and listened most reverently throughout.

One day I returned to our camp at dinner-time. Sundry good things were set out under an evergreen oak, but I saw a long yellow serpent coiled round the back of a chair with his head inside a cold game pie which stood on the table. Exasperated at this impudence I struck

him a blow on the back of the neck which brought the existence of his snakeship to an instantaneous conclusion. I was afterwards told that he was a chicken snake, and quite harmless, having no poison fangs. Nevertheless he is detested by the native housewives, as he makes wild work amongst their poultry. He would think nothing of swallowing a Brahma-pootra whole, feathers and all.

While encamped near Lake Kissimmee we resolved to explore a neighbouring lake called "Tiger," connected with Kissimmee by a deep natural channel, known by the name of Tiger Creek. To effect this we chartered a paraffin paddle-boat which casually arrived from civilized parts during our stay. As the channel is only two miles long we started in full confidence of a speedy transit, but in these latitudes nothing must be taken for granted. We found the channel choked with water weeds of every description, and our career was checked every few minutes by the necessity of stopping to cut away the mass of vegetable rubbish that clogged the paddles. In this manner we won our way painfully to a point about halfway through between the two lakes; here one paddle succumbed to the strain and we could get no further. The weeds closed round us and inflicted a complete defeat. Right and left was a fringe of swamp covered with a perfectly impenetrable growth of vegetation; beyond this stood sombre walls of tall pines, reminding one uncomfortably of rows of mutes. Their funereal aspect was enhanced by long tresses of Spanish moss which hung like weepers from the branches. It was impossible to reach shore. We had no punt, and, even if we had possessed one, it would have availed us nothing. We were imprisoned in the centre of as utter

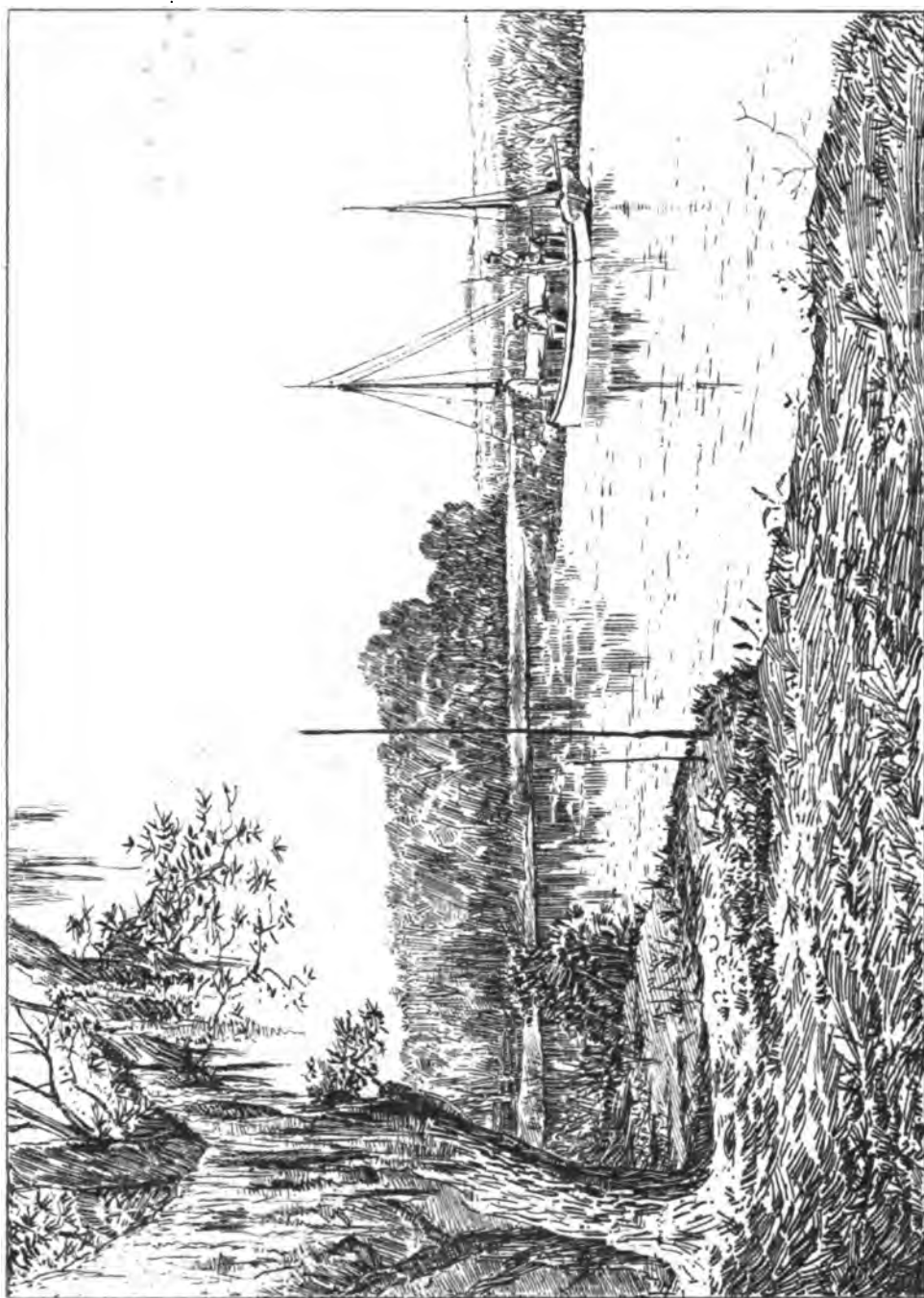
a wilderness as it is possible to imagine, far away from any human being, or any possible assistance. I got but little sleep that night. No one who has not had a similar experience can imagine the variety of forest noises that assailed one's ears. The nocturnal watches could certainly not be described as the "*stilly*" hours of night. One very persistent bird kept announcing, as plain as tongue could speak, "chuck . . . goes the widow," always pausing as if in meditation, after the word chuck.

The monotonous repetition became so exasperating that I rushed on board armed with a sixty-guinea Rigby chokebore, and wildly fired both barrels in the direction of the sound, with the result that the performer crossed to the other side of the channel, and began the same tune again. Ever and anon came the deep boom of the bittern. Contrasting with these harsher noises were the silvery tones of certain water birds warbled forth from beneath the lotos blossoms. They sounded so human, like the musical voices of pretty girls murmuring together in an unknown tongue. I suspect that the choir consisted of water-ousels and coots. In northern climates they would have been fast asleep at that hour, but the beauty of the southern moon and starlight was too good to be lost in oblivion; besides that they had their love affairs to discuss, and confidences to make to each other beneath the broad leaves and blue flowers. As for the frogs their name was legion, and until this experience I could not have conceived it possible that there existed such a variety; but much more ominous was the deep grunt of the alligators. They seemed to be literally all round us, and splashed noisily as they struck some unfortunate fish with their powerful tails—

for that is their manner of angling. We were only separated from them by an inch of deal plank ! Gloomy visions arose before my mind of a skeleton launch peopled by a skeleton crew and passengers, discovered years afterwards amongst the water-lilies. There seemed absolutely no hope of getting either backwards or forwards, or landing, or anything else. As I scanned the sky, the cheeriness with which the moon and stars glittered was positively irritating. Even Mark Tapley would have been depressed. I never was more relieved by the arrival of day-break. Coffee over, we searched every corner of the engine-room for wrenches, bolts, nuts, and other means of repairing the damage. After several hours' work we succeeded, and the paddles once more revolved, but this time everyone on board was engaged in getting the weeds out of the way, and preventing a repetition of the catastrophe. At last we emerged into a lovely lake, and spent the rest of the day in exploring it. In the evening we moored close to shore and lighted a camp fire to cook our dinner. Soon after retiring we were amused to observe a number of wild pigs emerge from the forest and warm themselves, presenting their curly tails and rotund sterns towards the embers to toast the same, quite like Christians !

The following day we crossed the water and proceeded on foot to Lake Rosalie, a couple of miles through the forest. Here we came upon a small settlement consisting of three houses. The young men thereof were in the act of launching, and pushing out in, a canoe. A few hundred yards distant an alligator was observed swimming on the surface in a peculiar manner, which attracted their attention. They paddled towards it until

they were close alongside, and finding the reptile did not dive, one of them administered a blow with his axe on the back of its head which proved its quietus. They towed it back in triumph, and the history of its proceedings was then revealed; the unfortunate beast at some previous period had received a shot in the nose: the wound had healed up, but left a hole which rendered it impossible to dive without suffocation, for the water would have entered, Nature having provided these creatures with a kind of valve nostril, which is closely shut under water. Without this provision they could not long subsist beneath the surface. We purchased the hide from the captors in memory of the curious incident. Far off, under the tall trees on the other side of the lake curled the smoke of camp fires, which we were told belonged to a community of Indians who haunted that region.



OUR YACHT "ENID".
KISSIMMER RIVER, FLORIDA.

CHAPTER XII.

FLORIDA—*continued.*

LAKE WORTH.—A PRIMITIVE SETTLEMENT.—RETURN BY SHORE TO JUPITER INLET.—PROFESSIONAL WRECKERS.—A TOILSOME TRAMP.—THE INLET AT LAST.—A STRANGE LOVE-BOWER.—AN INDIAN SHELL-MOUND.—THE INDIAN RIVER.—MANATEES.

IF my reader will look at the annexed map, he will see a lagoon on the Atlantic side of Florida called Lake Worth, situated in lat. $26^{\circ} 30'$. During an excursion on the Indian River we ventured out into the open ocean at Jupiter Inlet in order to reach this, although our yacht was a centre board flat-bottomed craft only suited for river navigation. On the way we were nearly wrecked, for a heavy sea arose, and the waves broke over us and filled the hold with water to such an alarming extent, that we appeared in considerable risk of foundering. My wife, who was down below, was nearly washed out of her berth by one of these waves, and made me promise that whatever happened, she should be permitted to return to Jupiter Inlet on foot, rather than encounter the Atlantic again in so cranky a craft.

I could not help laughing in the midst of our distress while tumbling about in the trough of the Atlantic rollers, to hear the negro cabin boy, who had never been to sea before, and who was terribly frightened by

this first experience, muttering to himself "Ise feel awfu' religious, Ise feel awfu' religious," repeating it like a passage of the Catechism, and in default of being able to bethink him of any form of prayer suitable to the emergency.

Lake Worth is in fact a salt-water lagoon connected with the ocean, and exceeding fifteen miles in length. It is so shallow, that while rowing across we were enabled to reach the sandy bottom with our hands, and pick up conch-shells tenanted by the living fish. The settlement was most original, and, at the time we visited it, quite new. At a wooden shanty near the landing-place we came upon a couple of youths and their sister, who were engaged in unpacking a number of cases containing tinned provisions. The shanty was designed for a store, and the goods were intended for its equipment. They were very gentlemanlike young fellows of Oxford-undergraduate style, and that their sister was charming and attractive is a matter of course. Let us hope that this, then infant, emporium has since become the Fortnum and Mason of the community.

The colony did not boast of any hotel, so we put up at the house of a settler at which the fare consisted principally of scalloped oysters. We were kept awake during the night by an incessant hammering, and ascertained in the morning that it arose from the nailing-up of boxes of tomatoes; and I may here observe that the locality grows the finest tomatoes in the world, so far as my experience goes. My host told me that he had realised one hundred and fifty pounds from one acre of tomatoes, and these were grown under the shade of a young plantation of cocoa-nut trees. The reason for the midnight activity of the colony was

that a schooner was preparing to sail the following morning for New York, taking with her the produce of the Lake Worth farming establishments.

During our stay I was much struck by the extreme politeness and courtesy of the young men. I made a remark on the subject to the captain of our yacht, who replied, "*I guess they think you have a revolver in your pocket,*" a cynical conjecture which I am satisfied was unfounded.

Next day we proceeded in our yacht to the extremity of the lake, and on the far side met with a number of wild cocoa-nut trees self-sown from nuts which had floated into the lagoon from the open Atlantic, borne thither by the Gulf Stream which here skirts the coast. Altogether it was a most original locality.

Amongst other features of the settlement that we visited was a cocoa-nut grove, three years planted, the fronds of which formed most romantic arcades. Underneath them we observed a young lady-settler attired in a white frock. Round her waist was a sky-blue sash and—a youthful arm—belonging to the captain of a yacht that had accompanied us to Lake Worth. We have since learned that the romance terminated, as all romances should, in an alliance for life. We also were introduced to a gentleman who had applied to the President of the United States for a Secretaryship of State, but had subsequently consented to accept the humbler duties of lighthouse-keeper on a coral reef a little way down the coast! The charterer of the yacht, whose captain had become the hero of the cocoa-nut grove romance, was a Boston capitalist who had purchased a couple of thousand acres of land to the south of Lake Worth,

expecting to make his fortune by cocoa-nuts, but he had been so knocked about by the same sea that upset our equanimity that even this El Dorado could not tempt him further, and he made up his mind to return to Boston a sadder and a wiser man without visiting his estate. Cocoa-nuts do succeed on this coast, but I fear they will never be able to compete with the produce of more equatorial regions.

The tropical climate enjoyed by Lake Worth is due not so much to its latitude as to the fact that the Gulf Stream touches the coast here. There are few districts of Florida which are perfectly safe from frost, but this is one of them. A traveller of an inquiring turn of mind, asked a native whereabouts the Florida frost-line was; the personage in question more forcibly than politely replied, "Try H*ll." As a matter of fact, the Northerners on rare occasions carry frost even as far south as Cape Sable, and it is only certain exceptional districts in the peninsula that are absolutely safe from it.

The inhabitants appear to have a very imperfect idea of distance, a failing which we were destined to discover in a manner not easily to be forgotten. They told us that *viâ* the shore the distance to Jupiter Inlet did not exceed five miles, and we unfortunately took it for granted that their information was accurate. After a day or two spent here, we proceeded to the northern extremity of the lake, instructing our captain to take the yacht round to Jupiter Inlet where we would meet her, travelling on foot by easy stages *viâ* the shell-paved strand. We entered upon the excursion with a light heart, and a still lighter commissariat. I now proceed to describe the consequences.

As already intimated we were entirely misled as to

the distance, which proved to be fifteen miles instead of five. We set out expecting an easy and delightful stroll along the beach, our sole provision being two hard-boiled eggs, and a couple of oranges. The route lay by the edge of the sea—indeed no other was practicable, for a thicket of thorny bush interlacing like barbed wire all over the surface made it impossible to penetrate the interior. The strand at starting was hard and firm, but before we had proceeded a mile we found ourselves in soft sand, in which we sank ankle deep at every step.

However we plodded on, always hoping that things would improve, but, on the contrary, they got worse. The beach presented an extraordinary appearance, being strewn with wreckage of every description. A low cliff was formed on our left by a mixture of sand and the *débris* of maritime disasters; ships' timbers, ornamental cabin panels, baulks of mahogany, medicine chests, fragments of boats, spars and cordage—in fact, every kind of article belonging to ships, could be discerned in this extraordinary conglomerate. The coast is extremely dangerous for navigation in consequence of the coral reefs and the Gulf Stream, which forms treacherous currents and eddies, but besides that, this is one of the localities to which vessels, feloniously doomed to be wrecked for the insurance, are brought to meet their fate. The coast is uninhabited, and we did not see a human being from the time we left Lake Worth until we reached Jupiter Inlet. But arrangements are made by dishonest shipowners with professional wreckers, who live in that part of Florida, and who meet ships by appointment; they steer on to the reefs with all sail set, the crew are "squared" and well

taken care of by the confederates. But besides this class of wrecks, there are others which are induced by the stratagems of the estimable industrial class to whom I have referred.

The beacon at Jupiter Inlet exhibits an intermittent light, and these worthies imitate it by throwing armfuls of Spanish moss upon a fire which has been prepared for the purpose. This blazes up for a moment, and mimics the effect of the revolving-light sufficiently well for their diabolical design. I mention these circumstances to account for the extraordinary *pot pourri* of wreckage through which we passed. Some of the vessels have been freighted with mahogany, and the houses of the settlers thereabouts are built of mahogany logs. When such a ship is wrecked the professionals brand each log, and any one removing timber bearing another man's mark would render himself liable to be shot.

But the bulk of these relics of maritime disaster are due to another cause.

The Gulf Stream which is responsible for so many things, impinges on the coast at Lake Worth, and for some distance to the north, and brings with it drift wood, such as ships' spars, timbers, cabin-fittings, and other gear, which are then piled on the shore by the easterly trade winds. This process has probably been in progress ever since the days of the Buccaneers, and thus has been built up the curious geological formation above described.

I have been informed that the losing of ships by false lights has now been put a stop to and is no longer practised.

We toiled on hour after hour without food except

the two eggs already mentioned, fatigued by the heat and the sand in which we sank at every footstep; the only living thing we saw was occasionally the back fin of a shark, which prevented us even refreshing ourselves with a bathe. We were cheered half way by the grim apparition of a ship which we saw about fifty yards off shore, and a little further on there were gaunt ribs through which could be discerned the iron vitals of a steamer, whose career had there come to a violent end. Soon after this it began to get dark, and what was worse, as the tide rose, the thicket of thorns already spoken of grew closer and closer down to the water's edge, leaving a rapidly lessening margin, until at last it seemed quite possible that we might be unable to proceed further, but such a crisis was happily never reached. While struggling on we were alarmed by the tramp of some heavy animal forcing its way through the dense covert not many yards distant and parallel with our course. There can be little doubt that it was a bear, as no other wild animal in those parts is heavy enough to account for the sounds we heard.

Before nightfall we caught a glimpse of our schooner making its way towards Jupiter Inlet, on arriving at which much longed for haven we looked forward to board her. It had now become perfectly dark, and we had nothing to guide us but the water's edge, but just as things seemed desperate a distant light came into view. We then knew that we were at the Inlet, but there were no signs of our yacht. We made our way towards the light, and discovered that it shone from the port-hole of a barge which had been stranded and fitted out as a residence by a young couple who

had adopted this strange nest, and who lived chiefly by fishing and kissing, though they also turned an honest penny by harbouring stray wanderers like ourselves. We, in our distress, regarded them as veritable angels of light providentially raised up for our salvation. They received us very kindly, and did all they could to make us comfortable; exhausted and famished as we were, we hailed with delight even a supper of tinned provisions and cold fish. Just as we were going to bed, the captain of the yacht arrived and announced that she had been wrecked on the reef just outside Jupiter Inlet! This was desperate news indeed, as she contained all our worldly goods. Our host immediately offered to go down to see whether nothing could be done to get her off. He first put across to the Jupiter lighthouse, and got a couple of the garrison to accompany him, and they returned with the captain to the scene of the disaster. They happily succeeded in getting our craft afloat again, and in a couple of hours brought her safe into Indian River, very little the worse for making such close acquaintance with the reefs.

On awaking in the morning we found that the refuge in which we had been so hospitably received lay at the foot of an Indian shell-mound fifty feet high, the flanks of which were covered with india-rubber trees, *Dracænas*, *Yuccas*, and scarlet-flowering *Salvias*.

Did Cupid ever select a more original retreat for a pair of his votaries than this old hulk stranded beneath the mysterious structure I have described—monument of an extinct race and of unknown antiquity.

Alas, how transitory is all earthly romance! Since our visit, steamers to Jupiter Inlet have been established,



A YOUNG COCOA NUT GROVE, LAKE WORTH.
UNEXPECTED PRODUCT.

and worse still, a railway has invaded its solitude, and the young couple and their strange bower have no doubt vanished.

On scrambling up the sides of the mound, I found it formed a quadrangle, and must have been intended for defence. The space this enclosed was considerable enough to contain a small village. The building material was oyster-shells. In connection with this fact I may mention that the bed of the Indian River is paved with oysters; the water is shallow, and indeed on our way up subsequently we repeatedly grounded upon oyster-banks, and were enabled to reach over the sides of the boat and supply ourselves with as many of these bivalves as we required. The builders of the fort just mentioned would therefore have no lack of material at hand for their work.

During the morning our host announced that his provisions were exhausted, and that our next meal must be fished for. His first move was to obtain bait, which was accomplished on this wise. Taking down from his armoury an iron barbed skewer he proceeded to the stern of the barge, and pointed out a crab about two feet below the surface; poising his weapon he launched it, making such accurate allowance for refraction that he pinned the creature through its back, and hauled it on deck in triumph.

After leaving Jupiter Inlet we sailed some miles up St. Lucie River and saw a manatee and her calf feeding among the water weeds.

We were informed that the hunters forward the flesh of this creature in refrigerator trucks to New York, where it is sold as prime beef; the carcase often weighs 1000 pounds.

The so-called Indian River is an inlet from the sea, extending northwards for one hundred and twenty miles. It is separated from the Atlantic by a narrow belt of shingle of varying width, but often not many hundred yards across. While sailing on the smooth waters of the inlet, we could hear the thunder of the Atlantic rollers close at hand.

The waters are full of fish, of which we caught two kinds—one the cavallo, a very handsome fish of considerable size ; the largest weighed about ten pounds. Our sole apparatus consisted of a line and hook, the latter baited with a piece of white tape. We caught them all by trolling, and in such rapid succession that we might in a few hours have filled the boat, but they flung themselves about so violently that we were compelled to give them their quietus with an axe until the deck resembled a shambles, and we soon had enough of butchery and blood and killed no more than we could consume. Another excellent fish was the pompono, several of which jumped on board ; it is hard to conjecture their motive, unless it was a thirst for information !

Not far from the St. Lucie river lives an eccentric character known as Portuguese Joe ; we paid him a visit in his log hut, and he regaled us with excellent home-grown bananas.

The same day we inspected a pine-apple plantation at a place called Eden, the seat of Captain Richards. He is an enthusiast about the Indian River, and has been most successful with his pine-apples, which were cultivated like turnips in ridges, and a very pretty crop they make. On leaving he presented us with some of the fruit, as also with a can of stewed turtle. An hour

later we fell in with a dug-out canoe full of Indians, their squaws and children. From them we purchased a haunch of venison and a wild turkey; we ourselves caught some cavallo fish. Any epicure would consider our dinner menu that day as worthy of envy.

CHAPTER XIII.

FLORIDA—*continued.*

THE UNITED STATES ROUTE TO THE WEST INDIES.—
TAMPA.—ITS GREAT HOTEL.—CUBAN COLONY.—
PHOSPHATE DEPOSITS.—AN AMERICAN SLEEPING-CAR
EXPERIENCE.

By way of contrast to the wilderness through which I have been conducting my readers, it may not be amiss to introduce them to a Florida city.

Last spring I returned from Jamaica in a fruit ship bound for Tampa, the chief port of Florida, on the Gulf of Mexico. The voyage occupied three days and a half, and is an eligible route by which to arrive at or return from the West Indies, being the Gulf terminus of the through line to New York, which is reached in forty-two hours by the express without change of carriages. The great Atlantic steamers convey the travellers in six days more to Queenstown, thus reducing the ocean voyage from sixteen days as viâ Southampton to six viâ the United States. The bay upon which Tampa is situated is a very extensive sheet of water, large enough to rank as an inland sea ; it is entirely landlocked, covering a surface of at least 250 square miles. The channel is deep enough for ironclads, which can approach Port Tampa, though there would not be much water under their keels ; in other parts the bay is shallow.

Soon after our arrival the United States squadron of

evolution, also termed the White Squadron, put in, and we were invited by the Admiral to pay him a visit on board the flag-ship, the *City of Chicago*, which we did. She lay at anchor at no great distance within the entrance, surrounded by four big sisters.

The admiral and officers gave a very lively dance on board, the deck being tented in with the flags of many nations. These formed a brilliant canopy combining all the colours of the rainbow, and rather killing the dresses of the ladies. The only colour that did not occur was sky-blue, an omission which was supplied by a lucky girl with ginger hair. I do not suppose that her gallant partners stopped to enquire the reason why, but it is wonderful how attractive her costume looked, furnishing as it did what Chevreul would call the complementary colour. However none of the young ladies had any reason to complain, uniformed partners were a drug in the market, for the officers of the entire squadron were present, and the competition for the hands of their fair guests was of the keenest ; even chaperones fared better than usual.

A kind of afternoon supper was laid out between decks, at which iced-punch brewed by the subalterns was in the ascendant. Our hosts showed us a magnificent service of plate presented to them by the citizens of Chicago. It was contained in several large oak chests and included every possible article that could be constructed of the precious metals, from teaspoons to a punch bowl large enough for a bath. We were informed that every ship in the United States Navy that bore the name of an American city had had a similar souvenir from the proud citizens. Iron-clads are not the only candidates for baptism who

have found it a blessing to have millionaires for god-fathers.

When we returned to our tender en route home we were escorted by quite a large fleet of ships' boats full of officers bent on seeing the last of their partners, and we departed amid a waving of lace handkerchiefs and fair hands that reminded one of the rustling of leaves in a forest.

As we got under weigh the sun set and a back ground of orange and purple sky threw a poetic glimmer about the white ironclads and their tall masts and spars; not only were the hulls white but crews and boats were of the same cool tint, so well suited to a hot climate.

Tampa has lately been endowed with one of the finest hotels in the United States. The Tampa Bay Hotel is quite a palace; Moorish in style, with horse-shoe arches, domes, turrets and pinnacles, all surmounted with glittering gilt crescents. It is surrounded by extensive lawns and gardens sloping down to the river; these are already attractive, and when the orange trees, palms and ornamental shrubs are established and developed they will become still more so.

The measurements of this splendid edifice are as follows:—

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Main building | 493 feet. |
| Gallery to Dining Hall | 145 " |
| Dining Room | 66 " |
| Kitchen | 68 " |
| Servants' Dormitory | 112 " |
| <hr/> | |
| Total length | <u>884 feet.</u> |

Inclusive of Conservatory, Pump-room, Dynamos and boilers, 1147 feet.

At night the whole façade is ablaze with electric

lights, the interior is full of fancy articles, mediæval cabinets, porcelain, and terra cotta vases, pictures, engravings, gilt and tapestried furniture, etc., etc.

While we were there a grand ball was given in honour of the Admiral and officers of the White Squadron, the grounds were splendidly illuminated, and as for the supper, they boast of a distinguished chef who exhausted his culinary resources upon it. An excellent band of musicians discoursed a selection of operatic and other music twice a day.

Altogether my readers will conclude that the establishment offers a luxurious opportunity of hardening oneself off after a couple of months in the tropics. We remained there three weeks.

During our stay a curious fête took place in the town in honour of the firemen; prizes were awarded to the corps which could most quickly drag their engines from the station, run out a hundred feet of hose, screw them on to the mains and direct a stream of water upon a red flag in the briefest time; and they were wonderfully quick, much too quick, indeed, for one unlucky spectator, who received full in his face a cataract of water which knocked him head over heels,—he was effectually extinguished, and crawled away like a drowned rat.

The fire apparatus is dragged by men, no horses are used. It was an interesting and exciting competition, and had a more practical value than most races, constituting in fact an effective fire drill. In America, where so many towns are constructed chiefly of wood, the fire-extinguishing service is of even greater importance than in Europe.

Close to Tampa there is a parklike tract of land

covered with fine old oaks hung with Spanish moss; it occupies a promontory which runs out into the bay. The ownership of this is in dispute: it is a kind of no man's land, and meanwhile serves the purposes of a people's park. Here races were held, and a picturesque assemblage of cowboys mounted on forest ponies fitted with Mexican saddles and wooden stirrups congregated around the course.

There were also a curious medley of settlers from the Florida wilds and prairies—a shaggy lot—and a large contingent of Cubans.

A very peculiar feature about Tampa is an extensive and increasing section of the town which is occupied by a Cuban population, speaking nothing but Spanish, and characterized by Spanish ways and habits. This singular colony has been brought there in connection with the tobacco industry, and their *raison d'être* is the carrying on of some twenty great cigar factories employing each hundreds of men, women and children. They have been driven out of Cuba by unwise government and excessive taxation. This portion of the city is reached by a steam tramway; one takes one's seat in a tramcar, and in a few minutes one finds one's self transported into a foreign country. The shops all have Spanish superscriptions, the play bills are Spanish, and if you address the passers-by in English they do not understand you. You find yourself in a world of black hair, black eyes and dingy complexions.

If you look up at the balconies you see women sitting there mostly bearing a general resemblance to Patti; I hope the Queen of Prima Donnas will forgive me. They delight in pets, and their verandahs are hung with canaries, song birds and parrots.

The men in their leisure hours have a curious fancy for kite flying, and the telegraph wires are all hung with the mortal remains of kites that have come to grief. They are also addicted to riding weedy-looking Florida ponies on Sundays and fête days, nearly always at full gallop. They earn very high wages, and can afford to live well. They are not devoid of sporting instincts, but scour the country with firearms in quest of rice-birds and other small fowl, the only winged things still surviving.

Over the shops one sees such Spanish announcements as " Mercedes Modista," " Medicinas Cubanas " (extra nasty I should expect) ; " Se habla vino tinto " (here is red wine) ; " Hotel de la Habana," etc., etc.

A redeeming feature about them is that they are fond of flowers and generally manage to have a bit of garden, untidy though it be, in which such things as Zinnias, Verbenas, Oleanders, Daturas and other bright-coloured blossoms are to be seen glowing amid the weeds.

As regards the rate of development of Tampa, I may mention that some years ago I was offered land in the vicinity for ten dollars per acre ; the very same land is now worth a thousand dollars an acre for building, and could not be bought for less. It formed part of the present Cuban colony.

At the period of our visit there was great excitement in connection with the subject of phosphate deposits. It is impossible to understand Florida without dipping a little way into its geology. It was formerly taken for granted that the whole peninsula was, geologically speaking, very modern ; but recent discoveries have shown that it is, on the contrary, ancient, and has enjoyed a previous state of existence.

In the vicinity of the town I visited some excavations. The sand had been cleared from the surface, laying bare a bed of fossil clay. This was as full of gigantic bones of pre-historic animals as a pudding is of plums. I saw the thigh bone of an elephant weighing 150 lbs. In ancient river beds in the neighbourhood extraordinary quantities of fossils are found, but commercially the most important discoveries consist of strata of phosphate of lime. The history of these is probably that in the course of long ages vast quantities of the smaller bones, mixed with shells and other animal matter, were deposited at the bottom of shallow lagoons.

The commercial value of these minerals is very great; some of the samples assaying as high as 80 per cent. of pure phosphate of lime. The land in which these beds occur of course has attained extravagantly high prices.

The fossils are found underneath the stratum of sand which covers Florida everywhere from end to end, to an average depth of twelve feet. It therefore appears that in a previous state of existence, Florida possessed a rich soil and exuberant vegetation, for otherwise these gigantic creatures—mastodons, mammoths, etc. could not have existed. However, there are their remains buried in alluvial soil free from sand, and it is evident that this ancient Florida sank beneath the waves, and remained there long enough to admit of the twelve feet of sand already referred to being deposited over the entire surface. This scurvy trick played upon her by nature has converted her from a fertile country into a tract of sand, the natural growth on which consists chiefly of pines and palmettos. This misfortune is partly compensated

by her climate, which enables a number of southern productions to be grown, which find a ready market in the Northern States.

Nor must it be supposed that the soil is all poor—on the contrary there are many tracts of rich land. Wherever the surface is sufficiently depressed to form a swamp, vegetable matter accumulates, constituting a deposit of great fertility. An analogous development exists in northern countries in the shape of peat beds, but the latter are rendered sterile by the presence of tannin. This is not the case with the former, as is proved by the dense and exuberant vegetation which characterizes it. Magnolia, hickory, water-oaks, canes and cabbage palms abound, and form a dense tangle difficult to penetrate. These lands when drained and cleared produce magnificent crops of sugar and rice as well as all other products requiring a rich soil, from cabbages and cauliflowers to tobacco and pine-apples. Sugar and rice mills have been established with great success. In cuttings made for drainage canals, I have seen the stratum of vegetable mould fifteen feet thick, constituting land of inexhaustible fertility, capable of supplying all the northern markets with early vegetables from December to May, and offering quicker and larger returns than orange growing. Where the depressions are deeper still, lakes are formed owing to the development of a silicious and impermeable pan a few feet below the surface, with the result that the whole peninsula abounds in sheets of water of every size, from the dimensions of a frog-pond to the great inland sea Ocheechobee already described. The marsh deposits above described throw an interesting and instructive light on the formation of coal.

If they were once more submerged beneath the

ocean, and left there long enough for the growth of limestone of sufficient thickness to act as a press, they would reappear as a seam of coal; the vegetation on the higher ground on the contrary would leave no trace, for no deposit is forming there, but thousands of generations of pines and palmettos have mouldered away to dust, bequeathing no visible legacy to the soil on which they grew.

We thus understand how it is that the carboniferous strata consist almost exclusively of marsh plants, and why fossil specimens of the growths on higher levels in that remote epoch are rare, being limited to isolated trees casually washed down by floods into the marshes and so preserved. The marsh strata would consist of silt mingled with a varying proportion of vegetable residuum, and constituting after a series of submarine and subterranean adventures extending over vast periods of time, coal deposits of widely differing quality—from the dirty product in which silt preponderates to the almost pure carbon which leaves scarcely any ash. But I fear I am verging too much on the scientific.

Florida is principally known in Europe in connection with orange groves. These can be made to thrive in the sandy soil by the aid of constant doses of artificial fertilizers. The business is a profitable one, provided it be in the hands of industrious and energetic men. Unfortunately, a large number of the young men who go out to Florida have failed at home for the want of those very qualities which are essential to success there. The country has capabilities and a good deal of money may be made in it, but not without industry, intelligence and close attention to business.

In connection with the fossils it is a curious fact that

scattered amongst the bones of huge terrestrial mammalia are found sharks' teeth of extraordinary size. Some of these are so large that it has been calculated that if the same proportion existed between the ancient teeth and ancient fish as exists between modern sharks and their teeth, the ancestors of the latter must have been something like two hundred feet long! There is a story of a settler from the wilds having been taken to visit one of these fields of fossils lately laid bare, and the extraordinary forms he saw affected his imagination to such a degree that he declared he had been unable to sleep in the dark ever since! An ingenious American accounted for the vast accumulation of animal remains by suggesting that that was the locality whence Noah's Ark started on its voyage, and that the remains were of animals that failed to secure a passage in her! A more probable explanation is that the advance of the ice era drove the mammalia by degrees southwards until they finally congregated in the peninsula of Florida, the most southern region of the North American continent, and there perished.

In the neighbourhood of Tampa is a stream called Six-mile Creek, the representative of an ancient and far more extensive river-bed; this stream has cut deep down through the upper strata, and presents to view sections of the older formations right and left. These prove to consist of phosphate of lime mixed with chalk; the floor of the channel is paved with fossils, both coprolites and bones. In following up its course I came to what I took for an arch excavated in the rock by the current and forming a natural bridge. What was my surprise on breaking it up to discover that it was the pelvis of some gigantic animal! The phosphate forma-

tion exists in patches and pockets throughout the peninsula, at least as far south as the Kaloosahatchie, but remained unsuspected and undiscovered until the last few years.

At the time of my recent visit the excitement had reached high fever point. Every owner of land was digging in all directions in search of the coveted mineral. It formed the all-engrossing topic of conversation. One no sooner looked at a Florida citizen than he lugged out of his pocket a handful of specimens varying from a mastodon tooth to a lump of pure chalk, and thrust it in one's face as a momentous discovery, but the interview always terminated in a magnanimous and unselfish offer to sell at a fabulous sacrifice the Golconda which promised such millions.

I shall wind up this section with a record of my experiences in that truly trans-Atlantic institution, the Pulman Express.

The sleeping-car system in America differs considerably from ours. There is no division between the ladies' and gentlemen's compartments. They are fitted up in a double tier, right and left of the central passage, and the berths are assigned indifferently to man or woman in the order of application.

On this occasion I found that an upper berth had fallen to my lot, and was naturally anxious to ascertain who was to occupy the lower one. I found that I was to share the section with a very pretty young American girl, and being anxious to cause her as little inconvenience as possible, I thought I would climb up to my perch early, so as to be out of her way. I had just divested myself of my last garment, when suddenly the curtains which descend from top to bottom, covering

both tiers of berths, were violently torn aside by my fair neighbour, who of course was unaware of my proceedings. However, there I was revealed for all the world to see, and as for her she fled screaming, and did not return for hours. I snatched madly at the curtains to get them together again, but not before several pairs of spectacles had been levelled at me. I also thought I heard sounds of suppressed cachinnation from sundry Yankees who were prowling about the corridor. Altogether as I lay down I felt worse than I had done on occasion of many a more perilous contretemps.

An acrobat would enjoy a great advantage over ordinary travellers condemned to an upper berth. The usual course is first to draw the curtains which descend from ceiling to floor, and, thus screened, to climb. The result is convulsive agitation of the said hangings, while first one portion of the patient's person and then another impinges on the inner surface as he struggles upward.

A fellow passenger told me that he had had a lower berth, the upper being unoccupied, and that he deposited his clothes in the vacant space above, but during the night a lady who joined the train at a wayside station was assigned that very berth, and finding the garments there she flung them one by one into his face, exclaiming, "I guess them's *your* fixings!"

It will be seen from the above incidents that travelling in American sleeping-cars requires experience and a certain amount of practice and nerve; nevertheless it possesses advantages for a man in search of adventures.

JAMAICA REVISITED.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE VOYAGE OUT.—THE AZORES.—BARBADOES.—HAYTI.
— JACMEL. — A DECAYED TOWN. — THE EMPEROR
SOULOUQUE.

ONE of the first days of 1891 found us hurrying along the Victoria Embankment to catch the special West-India Royal Mail train to Southampton. That morning was rendered memorable by an unusual circumstance. The Thames, which on the previous day had been masked from bank to bank by slowly moving icefloes, was now frozen solidly across; no open water being visible, and its surface lying motionless beneath the piercingly cold atmosphere. Such was our last experience of London as we started for the Tropics. Southampton was not less arctic; blue noses and fur coats were the order of the day as we embarked on board the Royal Mail S.S. *Medway*.

Some special circumstances also took our voyage to the West Indies out of the usual routine. We were bound for the opening of the Jamaica Exhibition, and carried with us for the entertainment of its expected visitors, a Corps Dramatique, a Variety Corps, some acrobats, a ventriloquist, and an eminent pyrotechnist. Moreover we formed part of a group of ladies and gentlemen who had been honoured by an invitation to be guests at Government House (or King's House as

the islanders call it) to meet H.R.H. Prince George of Wales, on the occasion of the opening of the Jamaica Exhibition by His Royal Highness.

Nothing occurred to break the weary monotony of an ocean voyage until we sighted the Azores, when the passengers crowded the deck, and worked opera-glasses and telescopes as if they had never seen land before in their lives. To our disappointment the islands were smothered in mist; the captain, however, put close in, and we were able to discern that these supposed remnants of the fabled continent of Atlantis were mountainous, rugged and bleak, and had not the aspects associated with orange and lemon groves. When we got clear of them the weather improved, even the sea-sick began to cheer up. There were musical people amongst the Corps Dramatique, and we had enjoyable concerts on deck every night, and an occasional dance as well. Moreover there were daily theatrical rehearsals of the plays which constituted the *repertoire* of the company.

One morning, while thinking that it was about time to get up, we heard an old gentleman outside our state-room talking in a loud voice. His conversation was particularly amusing, and finally he proceeded to recount all his son's virtues and failings, in the same high key. He seemed to be taking the whole ship into his confidence, and to make them free of his family affairs. I cautiously opened the door an inch or so to get a view of this eccentric personage, and found that it was the Heavy Father of the Corps Dramatique rehearsing his part in "Our Boys"!

One would have thought that familiarity with the flying trapeze, together with habitual indifference as to

whether they rested on their heads or their heels, would have served the acrobats in good stead on an ocean voyage, but I did not observe that they kept their legs in a sea way any better than less accomplished passengers.

Did anybody ever chronicle the incidents of a cruise to the tropics without a word about flying-fish? To avoid breaking this tradition, I may here observe that I watched their manœuvres carefully, bent on ascertaining whether they work their fins like wings during their flight, a point which has been disputed. I am now convinced they do; they rise and fall repeatedly during the same excursion into aërial realms, and also deflect their course at will to the right or the left. This could not be the case if their winglike fins remained stationary, nor could they otherwise prolong their flight to the considerable distances they do.

On the fourteenth day we cast anchor at Bridgetown, Barbadoes, and the passengers lost no time in landing and scanning the island in all directions to see as much of it as they could in the eight or ten hours at their disposal. It is the most prosperous though least attractive of the West India Islands, being little more than a coral reef, but teeming with an industrious population. The town is nearly as crowded as Fleet Street, with very different inhabitants however, for nine-tenths of those amongst whom one has to push and elbow one's way are of African nationality. The women look picturesque in their head-gear of bright-coloured handkerchiefs, and their clean tidy white frocks. We lunched at an establishment called the "Ice House," but the temperature, 86° in the shade, suggested a much hotter institution. Our repast

consisted of delicately fried flying - fish, fruit, and sangaree. The last-named is an artful combination of limes, claret, nutmeg, sugar and powdered ice.

After lunch we paid our respects at Government House, and were fortunate enough to find their Excellencies at home. They showed us their gardens in which were many orchids. The most curious object we observed was the Cannon-Ball Tree, the trunk of which seems afflicted with an extraordinary eruption resembling bunches of wooden polo-balls, at the extremity of long stems, which dangle all over it.

Just then the Barbadians were rather unhappy about their sugar crop, which, owing to the prevailing drought, was unusually scanty; and I noticed, as we drove through the island, that the cane fields were the most stunted I had ever seen.

In the Harbour several intercolonial steamers lay at anchor to which were transferred all passengers bound for Demerara, Trinidad, and other islands. We parted with some pleasant fellow travellers here, and adieux were spoken with regret.

A group of Carib Indians from the mountains of St. Vincent were shipped at Barbadoes, one or two of whom looked quite thoroughbred and resembled North American redskins. Their business is basket making, and they were to have a court to themselves at the Jamaica Exhibition, in which to exercise their calling. They were intelligent but taciturn. Our interview ended, we presented them with cigars, which they appreciated more than anything we could have offered them. Poor fellows! they are well-nigh the last of their race still surviving in the West India Islands.

We did not sight land again until we approached

Jacmel, one of the chief towns in the Black Republic of Hayti. Jacmel is surmounted by a Cathedral and a fort, behind which rise lofty mountains green to the summit. It looks very pretty and attractive from the water, but turns out on nearer acquaintance to be dirty and dilapidated to the last degree. The blacks seem to have repaired nothing since the French left them, but have spent most of their time in the exciting game of civil war. The President was reported to be dying, and in consequence a number of Haytians of various colours and complexions came flocking on board the *Medway* to escape the inevitable revolution and proscription.

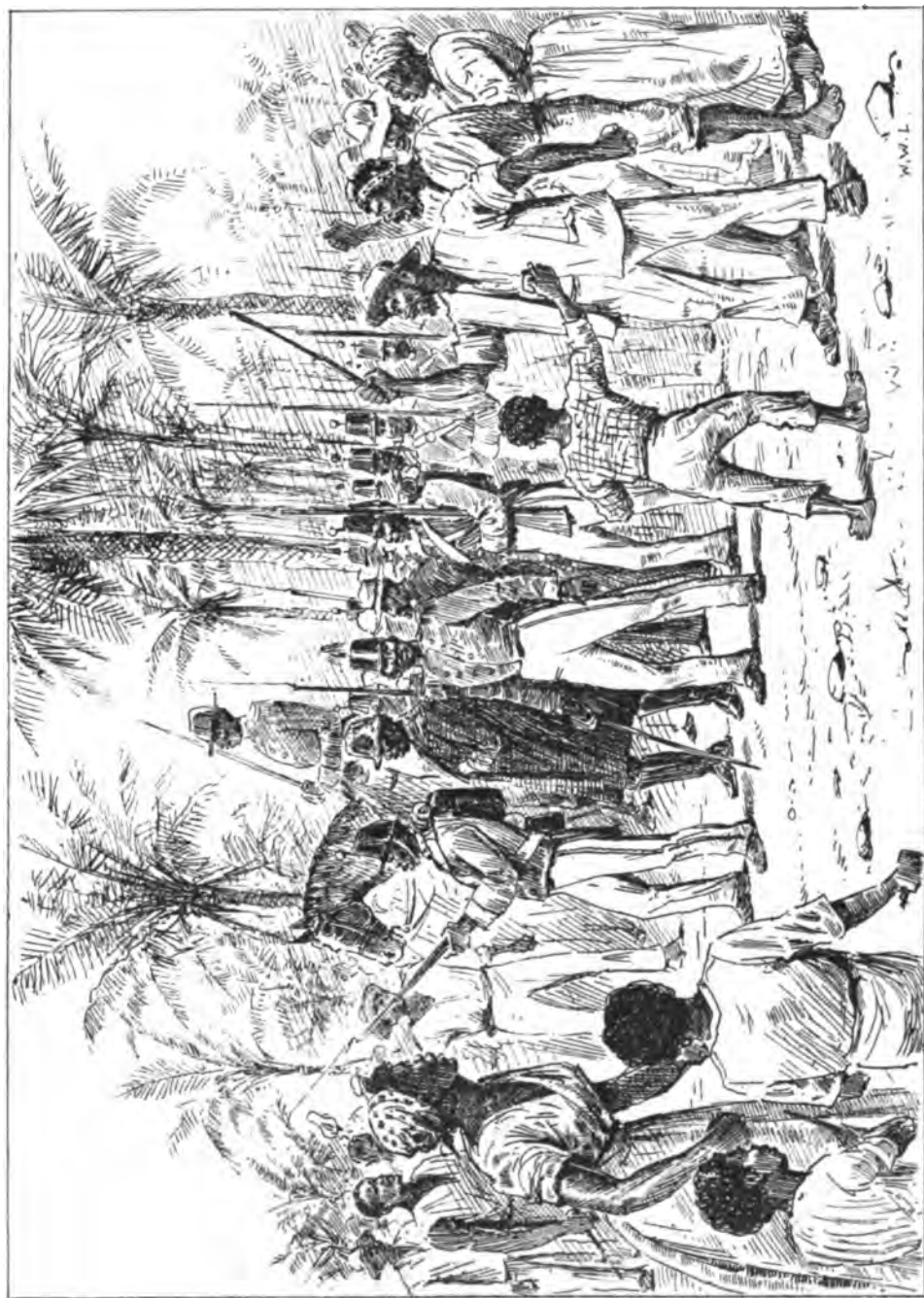
I never saw worse sailors in all my life. They came prepared for their fate; their worldly goods seemed limited to huge basins painted in gorgeous and dazzling colours, and of the most bizarre native designs. Besides these they were armed with deck chairs, into which they threw themselves all limp and miserable.

The rest of the day was spent in skirting the mountainous coast. It is a splendid island, but scarcely a human dwelling was to be seen, and one would have supposed it to be uninhabited. Its chief product is coffee, which grows wild on the hills, a legacy from the plantations established a century ago by the French. The natives are reported to be savage and treacherous, and a European traveller's life would not be safe amongst them.

I may here mention that many years ago I visited Hayti. It was shortly after the deposition of the Emperor Soulouque, and the substitution of a Republican form of government under the auspices of General Geffrard. I landed with the Admiralty agent at

Jacmel, our first experience being anything but encouraging. We stepped from the ship's boat on to a wooden jetty, rotten and dropping to pieces, with not an attempt at repair. At the base of this rickety structure stood the guard-room, resembling a wooden barn built on piles, and containing a specimen of the military force on whose bayonets the General's power rested. A more ragged lot of warriors I never beheld ; they were armed with rusty muskets. Their heads were adorned with shakos, some of which were devoid of peaks, while others had no crowns ; an Irish beggar would have been ashamed of the faded coatees in which their upper persons were encased—tattered, greasy, their colour nearly obliterated, the buttons long since gone, the tails all more or less damaged ; it must have been ages since their cross-belts had made acquaintance with pipe-clay ; resting on their stomachs hung rusty cartouche boxes. The outfit of these dusky sons of Mars was completed by ragged trousers, through the rents in which their mahogany-coloured skins were visible. Neither shoes nor of course stockings formed part of their equipment. Such were the first specimens I saw of the soldiers of Hayti, lately imperial but now republican. Evidently the army had not benefited much by the change.

The townspeople bore a depressed and subdued air, very unusual in negroes. They were squalidly dressed, apathetic and listless ; when spoken to they replied with a remnant of the courtesy bequeathed to them by the French. The town consisted of dilapidated houses, many of which had collapsed ; some had been burned down, their ruins occupying gaps in the streets shared by weeds and brambles ; the open spaces were cumbered



HOME RULE IN HAYTI A GOVERNMENT GOING OUT.

with broken pottery and rubbish. One road only appeared to lead out of the town ; few children were visible—everything suggested the idea of some great plague having lately passed over the community. The only apology for shops were a few stalls furnished with liquors and tobacco, and a store or two displaying cheap cotton prints and refuse cutlery. There was no market, no fish, flesh or fowl, no flowers, nothing to redeem the general desolation except a couple of houses of superior construction belonging to Europeans engaged in the mahogany trade. I visited the cemetery. All the French tombstones had been broken to pieces, and the materials used for building. In one house front I saw a white marble tablet which had been built into the wall upside down, and bore a mutilated French inscription. The only monuments that remained in the churchyard were piles of shingle heaped over the graves ; some of them had been white-washed. The bay contained a couple of schooners, but scarcely a native boat.

San Domingo is the finest island next to Cuba in the West Indies, but what a contrast does its deserted port and desolate city present to the crowded harbour of Barbadoes, the smallest and least fertile of the Antilles. As an illustration at once of the richness of the soil and the indolence of the inhabitants, I may mention that the sugar-canes established by the French forty years before were still fruitful, and I was informed that scarcely any had been planted since. Amongst the characteristic objects of the town were a number of very lean black pigs, with the bellies of greyhounds and the muscles of ghosts. They wandered amongst the ruins, a procession of silhouettes grunting in dejected tones,

and looking as if they too had last tasted the fruits of civilization during the French occupation. The only article of native produce that I could obtain as a trophy was a small clay pipe. I left the island full of pity for its people, and meditating on the enormous difference between the two races.

For those who are interested in ancient history I may mention that the "Emperor" Soulouque, who had recently been expelled, was a negro "pur sang" whose first appointment was to the important post of valet to a Haytian officer. He rose in that year of political convulsions—1848—to be President of the Republic. This startling transformation reminds one of the sudden promotion which is not uncommon in Oriental countries, where the barber of one day may become Grand Vizier on the next. Soulouque, however, was not entirely devoid of ability. The island for half a century previously had known no peace; incessant wars had desolated it, ever since the French proclaimed the emancipation of the blacks. A long series of negro rulers, sometimes called "Presidents," and sometimes "Emperors," had wielded an authority which while it lasted was absolute, and often tyrannical and cruel. In the course of these never-ending contests the island had been dismembered; the eastern end, known as Dominica and the population of which was chiefly Spanish, separated from the western end, Hayti, and organized a separate government of republican form. Both halves were shockingly governed; neither life nor property being safe. Soulouque displayed considerable vigour and ability in his administration; he restored order to the finances, and enforced the laws. For the first time since the splitting up of the island he

established peace with the neighbouring Republic of Dominica. Elected President originally he subsequently proclaimed himself Emperor, and was solemnly crowned by the Roman Catholic Primate of the island. He made a point of copying the ceremony of coronation adopted in the case of Napoleon. The bizarre mockery was carried out in every detail, not a functionary who figured in the enthroning of his ideal hero was omitted in the mimic ceremony of this negro, and he concluded the farce by an arbitrary creation of titles. He called into existence a perfect mob of Dukes, Barons, Marquises, &c., and his powers of invention failing he fell back upon such titles as the Marquis of Marmalade and the Duke of Lemonade.

These follies marked the decline and fall of such ability and common sense as he had ever possessed. He became tyrannical, capricious, and cruel, and was ultimately deposed by his indignant subjects, adding one more to the long catalogue of illustrations of how much easier it is to take the lead than to keep it.

When I visited Jamaica in 1859 this would-be Napoleon was an exile, and that island was his St. Helena. On arrival at Kingston the fallen hero intimated his royal will to Miss Blundell (sister of the once well-known Mrs. Seacole) that he designed to honour her hostelry with his presence. Her reply, couched in the politest language she could devise, was to the effect that she declined to entertain his ex-Majesty at her hotel *at any price*.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PALISADOES.—KINGSTON.—MYRTLE-BANK HOTEL.—
THE EXHIBITION BUILDING.—KING'S HOUSE.—HOSPITABLE RECEPTION.

THE next morning we were steaming along that curious landspit called the Palisadoes, which extends for many miles and forms the breakwater of Kingston Harbour. It is studded throughout its whole length with cocoa-nut trees, which form a picturesque fringe. Through these, glimpses of Kingston and its shipping are obtained, while dominating all is the stately range of the Blue Mountains, rising to a height of over 7000 feet. At the western extremity of the Palisadoes is all that remains of Port Royal, famed in the annals of the Buccaneers; most of the old town went down in an earthquake, bloodstained and steeped in crime and vice, but its aspect at present is that of a collection of Government buildings, set in grog-shops.

The *Medway* drew up alongside the Royal Mail Wharf and was immediately boarded by an aide-de-camp, whom the Governor had most kindly and considerately sent in order to make smooth and easy the landing of his fortunate guests, and we were soon whirling along in a procession of his Excellency's carriages on our way to King's House. Our route lay through Kingston, which comes down to the waters of the beautiful harbour, end on as it were, for the streets that reach it

run due north and south to the water's edge with the uncompromising straightness and directness of gridiron bars. Each of the avenues of traffic has in the centre a little river of its own, which conveys away the drainage of the town. These watercourses are lacking in poetry, for their surfaces are diversified with worn-out boots, dead cats, and other unsavoury objects, all on their way to the sea by easy stages; the present Governor, however, is promoting a scheme for the substitution of underground sewers.

The streets just described are crossed by others running as uncompromisingly due east and west. These have not the same advantage of running streams in their centres, but while traversing them the unwary traveller is liable to get an unexpected shower-bath, if his carriage is progressing at a rapid rate, for at each cross-road horses and wheels plunge into the drainage channels already described, which revenge themselves by rising in a geyser of doubtful purity right and left of him. If he escapes himself, not so the passer by, whose white duck trousers will show evidence of the *rencontre* for the rest of the day.

I may here mention that a good hotel has lately been established in Kingston called the Myrtle-bank. It is furnished with the most comfortable beds to be found in the West Indies, and has the advantage of a garden of cocoa palms sloping down to the sea, also of a shark-proof swimming bath. Kingston itself is not an attractive town, but it is the head of the railway system of Jamaica, and the starting point for some of the most interesting expeditions in the island.

It must have been designed and built by Quakers, who deemed sinful every attempt at architectural

ornament. The streets were looking their best just then, however, for brightly painted arches crossed them, in preparation for the important event of next week—the reception of H.R.H. Prince George of Wales.

We were presently passing through very different surroundings. The environs of the town consist of villas and gardens, the latter brilliant with a wealth of flowers, hard to match for beauty and variety: purple Bougainvilleas, Oleanders, crimson Hibiscus, scarlet Poinsettias, orange-coloured Pride of Barbadoes. One tree in particular was a mass of sulphur-yellow blossoms, others of bright blue and of white; and all these were interspersed with palm trees, bananas and other tropical products. There was also the picturesque native population on their way to and from market. The road bristled with preparations for the coming week, and was bestridden by arches, banners, mottoes and loyal texts of welcome, which continued more or less all the way to the entrance gates of the park in which King's House is situated.

The country slopes gently upwards from the harbour to the foot of the mountains, the lower ranges of which rear themselves abruptly at a distance of about six miles north of the town. The roadside fences consist of cactus cereus and wild pineapples, and very effective they are, for anyone trying to force his way through would reach the other side a thing of rags and tatters.

On our way out we passed the Exhibition building—a very handsome structure, of Moorish architecture, constructed from the design of Mr. George Messiter, and with such surroundings as no World's Fair ever had before. The view from the front commands everything to the southward, notably the long neck of land known as

the Palisadoes, with its fringe of cocoa-nut trees ; the old town of Port Royal ; the battlements of Fort Augusta ; Port Henderson, situated at the foot of towering hills ; the whole expanse of Kingston harbour, and the glittering waters of the Caribbean Sea, stretching away to the southern horizon. To the north, north-east and north-west the magnificent range of the Blue Mountains forms an exquisite and imposing background for the Exhibition buildings. The never-ending play of light and shade among the beetling cliffs and steep ravines adds interest to and brings into greater prominence the charms of a landscape whose beauty is unsurpassed.

One passes through the building into an extensive park, diversified with fountains and tall palm-trees, single and in groups. The latter were transplanted by special machinery, and look healthy and thriving, plenty of the soil about their roots having been brought with them.

In the park are various annexes for machinery in motion, and for the more bulky objects ; and there are also overflow courts for the excess of exhibits beyond what was anticipated and provided for. A military band plays daily, and at night the entire grounds are converted into a fairy scene, being illuminated with thousands of coloured lamps and electric lights, under the auspices of Messrs. Pain & Co., of London. There is also a theatre for the performances of the Corps Dramatique, already mentioned as having accompanied us on the *Medway*.

Arrived at King's House we dismounted at the foot of a stately flight of broad stone steps, and were welcomed by His Excellency Sir Henry Blake and his

noble lady with the generous kindness which distinguishes them.

King's House is—as best suits a tropical climate—rather a group of semi-detached buildings, than a palace architecturally complete in itself. The grounds and gardens surrounding it are lovely. Happy is the landscape gardener who has at his disposal royal palms, bamboos, mahogany and teak trees, Poincianas, cocoa palms, bananas, *Cycas revoluta*, and numberless other glories of the tropics, to distribute singly and in clumps as we distribute beeches, oaks and laurels about our English parks; and then what a setting of floral treasures to relieve the masses of green foliage, lustrous in tint and graceful in form:—Gardenias, Bignonias, Hibiscus, Poinsettias, Allamandas; but I will not fatigue my readers with endless lists.

The total absence of glass strikes the newly arrived visitor. Its place is supplied entirely by jalousies and Venetian shutters of lattice work. The fresh sea-breeze thus has free access by day and by night.

The banqueting hall, from the roof of which orchids hang, is built upon a platform raised on broad stone steps above the lawn. Three of its sides consist of arches entirely open to the elements, but sheltered from the sun by a verandah which completely surrounds them, ensuring perennial coolness. It is detached from the main building, except that a long flight of handsome stone steps, covered overhead but open at the sides, connect it with the reception rooms above to the south.

The table, at all hours spread with pyramids and trophies of handsome tropical fruits, glittering with plate and glass, and glowing with flowers, forms an



MYRTLE BANK, KINGSTON HARBOUR, JAMAICA.

appropriate and attractive centre to this splendid saloon, which is occasionally entered by humming-birds, who rifle every blossom that overhangs the table-cloth, or flutter about the chandeliers attracted by the gilded ornaments (possibly thinking them a likely find for honey); other licensed visitors are sundry parrots who stalk gravely about the floor—candidates for stray attentions and tit-bits. If they think themselves unduly neglected they occasionally pinch one's extremities beneath the table, but this reminder is administered with well-bred gentleness—not in anger, only as a hint.

The broad and handsome flight of steps leading down from the reception rooms to the banqueting-hall lends itself well to occasions of state ceremonial, grand dinners, or ball suppers; processions of uniforms or gala costumes looking particularly brilliant as they file past. Corresponding to the north wing just described, is the ball-room wing on the south side; that too is entirely open, communicating with verandahs on three sides. Access to these is obtained through tall arches of massive masonry. The gardens beyond are thus visible from the interior, and when illuminated, as on occasion of the state balls which we attended, had a most fairy like effect. A splendid costume ball was given here by their Excellencies in honour of H.R.H. Prince George of Wales on occasion of the opening of the Jamaica Exhibition, and later on a children's fancy dress ball. Both events will long be remembered by those who had the good fortune to be present.

CHAPTER XVI.

VISIT TO A VALLEY IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS RANGE.

—INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AT STONEY HILL.

SOON after our arrival we made an excursion among the mountains to a place called Stoney Hill, the site of an Industrial School. Our way to it lay along a most romantic tropical valley, filled with a dense vegetation of bananas and palms, and dotted all the way up at short intervals with the cottages and provision grounds of the coloured population. Many of these cottages were of a kind of basket work sufficient to keep out prying eyes, but allowing the air free access. The narrowness of the valley shuts out the trade wind, so that the foliage of the banana tree is perfect, instead of being torn to ribbons as it always is in more exposed places. And what a superb sample of vegetation it presents when perfect, surmounted as it is with a plume of broad stately leaves of tenderest green, 8 or 10 feet long, beneath which hangs a bunch of fruit often containing 100 bananas arranged in a spiral form and terminating in a sort of movable blossom growing downward, which, as it descends, continues to develop a progeny of baby bananas until it is exhausted.

Underneath the banana trees were coffee-shrubs covered with small white flowers of delicate fragrance, while above them waved cocoa-palms, each decorated with a heavy cluster of nuts. The wild flowers were

legion, most of them deserving a place in our hot-houses—many of them already represented there. We stepped out of the carriage every few minutes to gather these. We passed also some handsome flowering trees, one of which, the *Spathodium*, bears masses of large flowers of the deepest orange colour ; another clusters of bright crimson blossoms. Clumps of graceful feathery bamboo fifty feet high and with stems as thick as a man's leg were interspersed.

When we reached the summit of the pass a splendid panorama opened to our view, the great plain of Liguanea, which intervenes between the Blue Mountains and the sea, lay apparently at our feet, and beyond it was the magnificent harbour or land-locked bay which includes Kingston and Port Royal within its circuit, and a long vista of retreating mountain ranges which line the coast towards the west, including the Healthshire hills. Beyond their summits were visible, spread out like a map, the extensive gulf formed by Portland ridge, with its lesser bays of Galleon Harbour (a significant name which recalls the Buccaneers), Salt River Bay, West Harbour, and Holme's Bay. Nearer to us could be discerned the estuary of the Rio Cobre, which, after passing Spanish Town, makes its way into Kingston Harbour opposite Fort Augusta. The effect of this splendid panorama was enhanced by the glowing colours in the western sky which formed the background, for sunset was approaching.

The Superintendent of the Industrial School made us sign our names in his visitors' book, and we inspected the boys, about fifty in number, all coloured, a healthy lively lot. They were playing at various games, school having been long over. We passed the workshops, in

which various handicrafts are taught, but were too late to see the lads at work.

We were told that the buildings had been constructed for military barracks, and that Stoney Hill was intended as a military sanatorium. But the authorities, with their usual wisdom, crammed 250 soldiers into a dormitory now judged capable of accommodating not more than 50 boys. I need scarcely add that it did not prove successful as a sanitary experiment.

On our return trip we passed Constant Springs Hotel, one of the new hostelries which have been established in Jamaica, and which now render it practicable to make the tour of the island with comfort. It is a handsome structure, surrounded by magnificent scenery, and can accommodate more than 100 guests ; it is conducted on the American system.

CHAPTER XVII.

EXPEDITION ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS TO ST. ANN'S BAY.

—ST. THOMAS IN THE VALE.—MOUNT DIABLO.—

GIANT TREES.—MARKET DAY AT MONEAGUE.

WISHING to see the north side of the island, we obtained leave of absence from our kind hosts at King's House, and started one morning by the 8 A.M. train to Ewarton. Our route first took us across a plain past Spanish Town and the Cumberland Pen race-course, and soon afterwards we reached the river Cobre and threaded our way along the lovely valley through which it runs. This pass was named by the Spaniards, Bocca di Aguas (Mouth of the Waters), after the English occupation corrupted, with execrable taste, into "Bog Walk." I have already described the scenery as observed in traversing it by road. Its aspect from the railway is materially different, because the line maintains a high level, and the traveller looks down into its recesses upon the extraordinary wealth of luxuriant tropical vegetation which adorns the banks of the foaming river, lined with masses of tall, feathery bamboos, and extends far up the hill sides. This vale of rare beauty is twelve miles in length, and it would be hard to find its match in all the world.

The route continues interesting because from each station at which the train halts, one gets picturesque glimpses of native life, manners and costumes.

At Ewarton we were met by a carriage which we had telegraphed for to Moneague, a mountain village, ten miles off; to reach it, we had to climb the steep flanks of Mount Diablo. The road, however, is excellent and admirably engineered. It is the Simplon of Jamaica. The horses toil diligently up mile after mile of the winding ascent, and as a higher and yet higher elevation is reached, the views looking back towards the great plain become more and more enchanting. A lady observed that it reminded her of a picture she had seen called the Plains of Heaven.

The plain is called St. Thomas in the Vale, but it must not be imagined that its floor is level. On the contrary, it is covered with miniature hills and hollows, all adorned with exuberant vegetation.

As the ascent continues, a decided coolness makes itself felt, and the abundance and variety of the ferns and mosses attest the increasing moisture of the air. Nevertheless, the vegetation does not lose its tropical character, but bananas and palms continue to occur, and orchids are far more numerous than below. Every now and then a huge *Ceiba* tree is passed. This giant of the forest is also known as the buttress tree, and the great buttresses it throws out from recesses, in which various trees and shrubs love to nestle. I have seen a well-grown orange-tree, covered with fruit, occupying one of the bays so formed. Amongst the parasites that lodge on the branches of the *Ceiba* is a trailing plant the popular name of which is the bell flower, with thick, glossy, green leaves starred all over with large, cream-coloured blossoms about the size of the *Datura*, but streaked inside with purple. It hangs from the great limbs in heavy festoons, and forms a feature as re-

markable as it is beautiful. So varied are the air plants that cling to this tree, that an aged specimen forms a botanic garden in itself.

Amongst the wild shrubs observed *en route* was the *Blakea trinervia*. Its glossy leaves have each three ribs instead of one—hence its name. It bears deep rose-coloured flowers, of the size of Camellia blossoms, but its centre resembles that of the passion flower. The petals are thick and solid, as if cast in wax. Another frequently occurring roadside plant is Ginger. This bears extremely handsome spikes of wax-like white flowers.

A couple of hours of alternate hill and dale brought us to Moneague, a large mountain village, which the natives by a stretch of imagination dignify by the name of town. It is a collection of scattered houses and gardens, containing one good store kept by an enterprising, intelligent coloured man, Mr. Sutherland, who also owns a good livery stable. It was he who provided the well-appointed carriage and pair which met us at Ewarton station, and which we kept for four days during our trip through the island and along the north coast.

Mr. Sutherland is also the most active promoter of a new hotel which is in course of construction. The site is well chosen, airy, and healthy. It occupies the summit of a hill commanding extensive and picturesque views all around, and will be an important boon to travellers, for as yet there is not a single comfortable hostelry in the interior. It will also serve as a sanatorium where invalids who find the plains too warm can make sure of a climate always fresh and bracing, but never cold. This last fact is attested by the

bananas, palms and coffee plantations, which thrive on all sides of Moneague. It is also a central point for the tourist, from which many charming and unique excursions can be made.

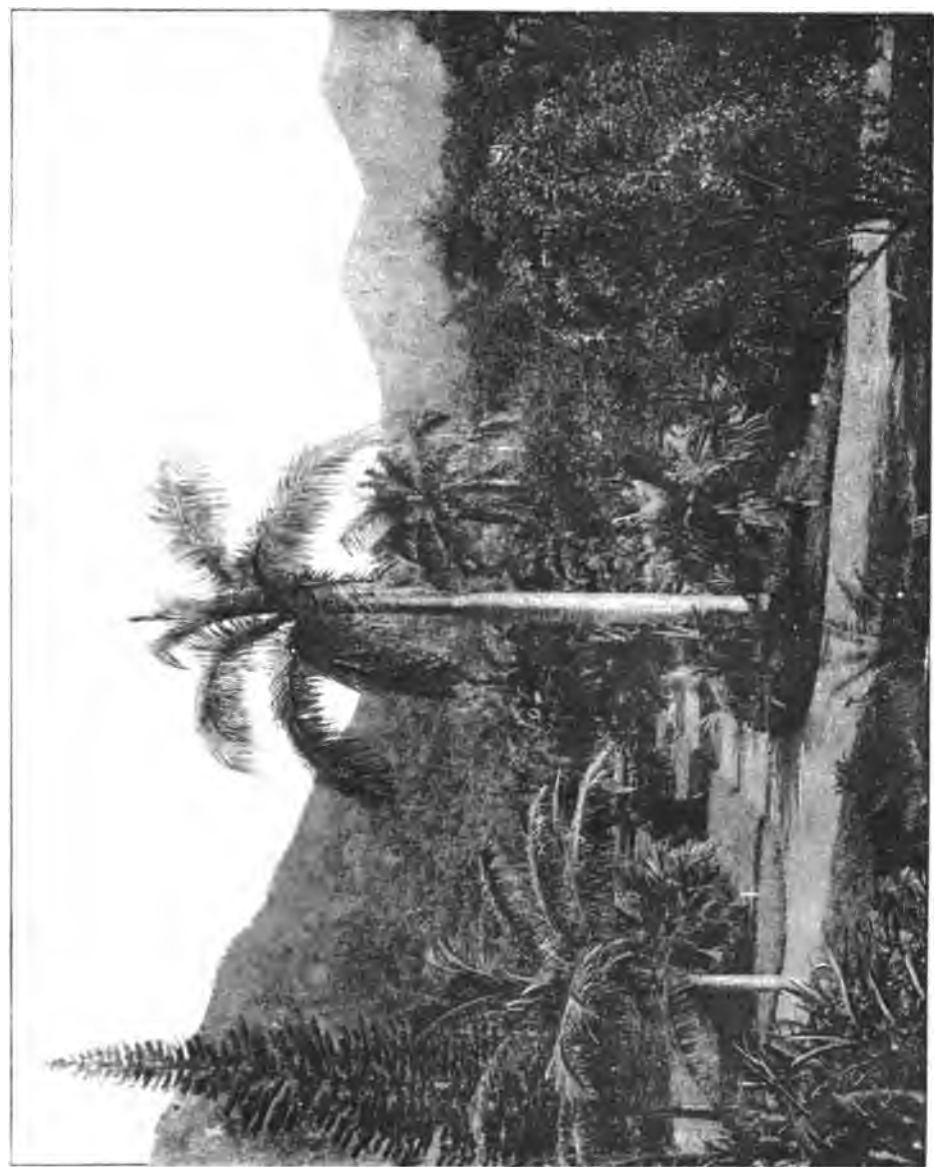
It was market day, and the place was thronged by a most picturesque crowd of natives assembled from all the valleys, hillsides and mountain plateaux for miles around.

Here, as in every town and village of any size I have visited in Jamaica, there is an excellent covered market hall, where fruit and poultry and all the necessities of life are brought for sale on women's heads. Every sort of article is so carried. The extreme range which I have myself observed extends from a small pocket prayer-book on the way to church, to three live pigs on the way to market. The latter were neatly curled up and fitted into a round, shallow basket.

Nothing becomes the native women better than the bright-coloured handkerchiefs they wear, turban fashion, round their heads, whereas they look hideous in the kiss-me-quick bonnets of their white sisters. The prettiest vegetable they bring to market is the fruit of the Akke tree, in scarlet pods, which gape open when ripe and display inside a black, shining bean, attached to a primrose-coloured substance resembling suet, which is eaten boiled as a vegetable. It is rich and nutritious, and initiated Jamaicans of all classes are very fond of it.

There were besides water melons, cucumbers, yams, sweet potatoes, bananas, plantains, bread-fruit, poultry, eggs, and confectionery, in the compounding of which the women are adepts.

Market day at Moneague offers as typical a congre-



BOTANIC GARDEN JAMAICA.

gation of the people of the interior of the island as is anywhere to be found. I have already said that marked and important progress has been made in the direction of industry and intelligence, but still much remains to be accomplished. I cannot of course claim that they are the most model peasantry in the world, but my point is that, where so obvious and decided an advance in their development has been attained and is still in course of growth, the prospect for the future is full of hope. Their condition is one of improvement, not of stagnation. Having had experience of the African race in various parts of the world, I have no hesitation in saying that the Jamaica section of them is by far the best and most promising I have yet met with.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SURVIVAL OF AFRICAN SUPERSTITIONS AMONGST THE
JAMAICAN NEGROES.—RELICS OF THE SERPENT MYTH.
—CURIOUS IDENTITY OF EMBLEM AND CUSTOMARY
SACRIFICE WITH THOSE OF THE TYPICAL MEDICINE
MAN OF THE GREEKS.

HAVING written of the favourable aspects of the coloured population of Jamaica, candour compels me to refer to one or two of their failings. No one would suspect that these merry, light-hearted, thoughtless folks were votaries of very dark and degrading superstitions; that, notwithstanding all the influences of education and Christianity—of school, chapel, and revival meetings—they still cling to the repulsive myths which their ancestors brought with them in slave ships from the Congo, the Niger, Ashantee, Dahomey, and the Gold Coast. Yet so it is: they believe that the powers of evil can be turned aside from their purpose by fetishes, and coaxed and conciliated by medicine men. Barbarous rites are still practised, of which the high priests are a class which deserves to be described. It is essential that they shall be deformed in some way. The minimum qualification is a vile squint; if the candidate for this inner brotherhood is humpbacked as well, so much the more implicit would be the faith of his disciples in the potency of his spells. His sceptre is a stick or rod, whereon is carved a serpent—a degraded

Æsculapius, for that distinguished Greek M.D., if I mistake not, bore the same symbol, and was only a refined variety of the Obeah man.

The Greeks used to sacrifice a cock to Æsculapius ; the West Indian magicians sacrifice cocks as a part of their incantations to this day. Those Egyptian magicians who cast down their rods before Pharaoh, when lo ! they became serpents, were also probably Obeah men.

‘ Obeah ’ in the West African dialects means serpent, and the whole superstition has its origin in the once universal worship of the serpent.

The Obeah man sets up, amongst other things, to be a ladies’ doctor. Various female ailments are attributed to witchcraft and evil spirits, and he claims to be the only agent who can exorcise them. The practice of his profession, which is reported to be attended with gross immorality, has a most corrupt and degrading influence upon the population, and the Jamaica Government are doing their best to suppress it, having rendered the exercise of Obeah rites penal, so that now they are only celebrated with the greatest secrecy, and the sceptres and stage properties of the priests are seized and forfeited wherever found. This renders it almost impossible to obtain specimens. Collections, however, have been made, and were offered for the Jamaica Exhibition, but as it was feared that they might give offence to the coloured population and prevent their attendance they were not exhibited.

One characteristic of the orgies practised in connection with these African superstitions is that the votaries, both male and female, are required to divest themselves of all their clothing, and take part in the

proceedings in a state of absolute nudity. It is rumoured that in the neighbouring black republic of Hayti, children are sacrificed on these occasions. It is startling to discover that the Pagan beliefs of Central Africa have still such a hold upon a population so long in contact with civilization. Those who know them well, declare that if it came to a trial of strength between these and the teaching of the chapels, the latter would get the worst of it.

Irrespective of the resulting demoralization, the political influence of the fetish men has before now made itself felt. Revolts and disturbances have been fomented by them, and the course of law, order and good government threatened. No wonder, therefore, that the authorities make every effort to stamp out this plague spot, which nevertheless is dying very hard. A magistrate whom I met at Government House informed me that he has found it a most difficult evil to cope with, as it was almost impossible to get witnesses to appear in open court and give evidence in Obeah cases, partly through sympathy and partly through fear.

These African magicians are the handy men of necromancy. They bewitch the crops of an obnoxious neighbour for their client, or safeguard those of the latter. There is no ailment they do not undertake to cure, no passion they are not ready to minister to. They have poisons for the vengeful, love philtres for the amorous, potent spells for the jealous, the sure tip for the covetous. It is their part to provide the mystic talisman or the artful concoction; their patient's to supply the base dollar which these wizards condescend to accept—just as a touchstone of faith. They have a considerable traditional acquaintance with the properties of plants,

and amongst the endless variety to be found in a tropical climate there are many dangerously powerful. They know of deadly vegetables that kill and leave no trace of poison, of others that inflame the passions to madness, of others that plunge those to whom they are administered into a condition of dreamy indifference.

The rags and bones, rosaries of blood-stained beans, magic mirrors, human hair, and dolls to be blindfolded or stuck full of pins, as the occasion demands, &c. &c., are only outward visible signs, pegs on which to hang the faith of their dupes. Behind them is a by no means innocent armoury of instruments to compel success.

In other West India islands and in some parts of the Southern States of America, Obeah rites are still practised by the negroes. It is the case, for instance, in Louisiana, Alabama and the Carolinas.

In Jamaica, however, the palmy days of the Obeah man are over. The arm of the law is becoming too strong for him, and his field of action is becoming more contracted year by year. It is dangerous now to have a snake stick on the premises—it would be damning evidence. The practitioner has to be very cautious how he allows even the less obvious stage properties of his profession to be seen by that hard-hearted sceptic, the policeman.

Before we judge too severely the credulity of these poor African dupes, we must remember that the belief in witchcraft is not yet extinct even in enlightened England. The gipsy fortune-teller still flourishes and knows how to decoy the nimble shilling out of the pocket of the village maiden, fresh from school and church and chapel. In Ireland I have known a tenant to attribute the bad quality and deficient quantity of his

butter to the spells and incantations of a malevolent old woman in the neighbourhood, and actually give this as an unanswerable argument for a reduction in his rent! I have not yet heard, however, that even an Irish sub-commissioner has admitted this as a plea valid in court.

Less than three centuries ago witchcraft was dealt with as an incontestable fact by the English legislature, and up to two centuries ago women were burnt at the stake on suspicion of practising it. In Italy, even to this day, Dr. Dulcamara reaps a golden harvest in return for his love potions and nostrums. In Germany the belief in gnomes and fairies is not yet extinct. Nor is the era of the magic circle of Dr. Faustus and of the magic bullets of Der Freischütz very remote.

CHAPTER XIX.

TROPICAL GLEN NEAR OCHO RIOS.—STRANGE FORMS OF
VEGETATION.—SPLENDID FERNS.—ORCHIDS.—HUM-
MING BIRDS.—THE VILLAGE OF EIGHT RIVERS.—
FALLS OF ROARING RIVER.—CURIOUS PHENOMENON.
—MISS WATSON'S LODGING-HOUSE.

THE horses have now been changed and the carriage is waiting, so after a stroll through Mr. Sutherland's garden, in which we saw two magnificent *Clerodendrons* in full blossom, we started for St. Ann's Bay—our destination for the night. On the way we passed several park-like tracts of country covered with tall, rich guinea grass and adorned by handsome trees single and in clumps, as if planted out by some skilful landscape gardener. The savannas are all feeding grounds for horses and cattle, both of excellent quality. We met an English cavalry officer who actually thought of securing some of the Jamaica horses as troopers, and as for the cattle, the uplands of Jamaica appear to me capable of supplying all the West Indies with beef. We also saw many sheep, which the climate is said to suit well—at all events the mutton was invariably good.

One feature of Jamaica life constantly recurred here as in every district in the island which we visited, and that was the picturesquely dressed coloured women carrying heavy loads balanced on their heads and often

leading a child by the hand at the same time. Occasionally their husbands would be riding in advance of them, carrying nothing except an umbrella.

For the last few miles before reaching Ocho Rios (The Eight Rivers) the road passes down a deep and narrow glen, so walled in by rocks and precipices as to be screened from every wind that blows. The humid, steamy atmosphere is more or less stagnant, and the result is, that all moisture-loving vegetation runs riot. Ferns great and small, ground ferns, climbing ferns, arborescent mosses, orchids, tillandsias, india-rubber plants, &c., &c. abound. On the rocks high overhead are perched forest trees with wide-spreading branches. From these trail tresses of a parasite of immense length. It is a kind of vegetable cordage which fixes itself on some great limb and then grows downwards until it reaches the soil below; to do this it has in some instances to descend from 100 to 150 feet. It then strikes root and furnishes a support for various climbing plants, from the purple convolvulus upwards. Some of the Tillandsias throw out long spikes of crimson blossoms, much loved by humming birds, which may often be seen poisoning themselves opposite flower after flower in rapid succession, and probing each honey-bearing calyx with unerring precision. Many orchids display sprays of pale green, white and primrose-coloured blossoms. Unfortunately they have a trick of fixing themselves in the most inaccessible places. I cut a fern frond upwards of 12 feet long, and fastened it to the box seat. It there formed a sunshade over the whole length and breadth of the carriage, with several feet to spare. Maiden-hair ferns decorated the roofs of the numerous limestone caverns that lined

the roadside, and climbing ferns recurred in infinite variety.

At some points of the gorge rock was piled on rock right overhead, poised as if ready to plunge into the depths below, but these rocks were not naked as they would have been in a northern climate. They were draped with festoons of climbing plants brilliant with blossoms, a network of which spread over their surface. From the edges of precipices hung curtains of the deepest green, starred with purple trumpet-shaped flowers.

In the laps of many of the rocks, where sufficient soil had lodged, grew wild bananas and palms of various kinds. The variety of vegetation seemed infinite, its luxuriance was such as cannot be imagined by those who have not had the privilege of being eye-witnesses.

A collection of paintings truthfully setting forth the wonders of this ravine would be the sensation pictures of a London season. We seemed to be passing through a dream of fairyland, and only to wake up when we emerged again into the open, where lay before us the broad expanse of the Caribbean Sea, blue and sparkling as if set with millions of sapphires.

Soon afterwards we came to Ocho Rios, a little seaside town prettily situated but containing nothing of special interest. There is an apothecary's shop kept by a good-looking young woman of colour. I asked her whether she was the only doctor there. She laughed and said yes. She seemed likely to have plenty of patients amongst the young men.

We obtained a cup of coffee at this village, infused from berries grown by the peasantry on their provision

grounds, and sweetened with brown sugar of the same homely manufacture—both good.

When the horses had rested we drove along the coast until we came to a remarkable phenomenon called the Roaring River. This torrent, instead of scooping out a bed for itself, runs over the surface, through and among large handsome trees. There is a considerable volume of water, seemingly of an irritable, fussy disposition, for it frets and fumes amongst the trees and rocks and makes as much noise as Niagara. From its appearance and the absence of any channel, one would suppose it to be due to some temporary flood passing that way for the first time. Nevertheless it is constant, and has presented the same eccentric characteristics from time immemorial. A couple of miles above there are very effective falls of considerable height, also a most picturesque pool. The falls have the same curious characteristics as the river. There is no channel, and trees and shrubs, firmly rooted, protrude and overshadow the angry turmoil of waters. Amongst these are cocoa-palms, and stumps which have held their own in the rush of the furious cataract, though the top has been snapped off by the wind. These stumps are draped with creeping plants. Wherever a rock or a root shows itself above water it is covered with ferns and a tangled mass of other plants. Below the falls occurs a quiet pool, as is often the case from Niagara downwards. Into this the waters glide smoothly over a ledge of rocks and through a dense thicket of trees of various kinds. It is called Emerald Pool from its bright green colour.

The road continued its course between palm groves and the blue sea until we reached St. Ann's, where we

found rooms prepared for us at Miss Watson's. She had in fact placed a small house called the Bungalow at our disposal. The rooms were clean and comfortable, and we soon had a very tolerable repast before us, chiefly fresh fish and reasonably good mutton. I may mention, however, that the next day Miss Watson unfortunately took a more ambitious flight. She placed before us a strange-looking object which appeared to have four legs but no body. Where the body ought to have existed there was a depressed plain which offered a tough resistance to the carving appliances of the establishment. I had never heard of the *Ornithorhynchus* being amongst the Jamaican fauna, otherwise I might have conjectured that a specimen of that creature lay before us. We gave up the riddle and sounded the handbell, which brought a smiling, buxom but very brunette maid tripping across from the kitchen. She initiated us into the secret—it was a duck! devoid of flesh and with no cavity for its vitals; perhaps in a warm climate these accessories are not necessary.

Dinner over we made a tour of the premises. At the back was a yard in which grew the ubiquitous cocoa palms. To one of these we found our horses had been tied for the night and made happy with an armful of guinea grass, behind which there was scattered a collection of deal cases, empty casks, wicker-work hampers, and other untidy objects. In neglected corners grew *Hibiscus* bushes blazing with crimson flowers. The last of the turkey and guinea fowl were just retiring to their perches, and two or three dogs were wandering languidly about, looking the quietest and most innocent of creatures. I mention

all these because later on they formed the scenery and *dramatis personæ* of a lively and memorable performance.

The front of the house commanded a fine view of the bay in which lay a couple of schooners at anchor, and the Atlas steamer *Adula*, which on the morrow was to sail all around the island to Kingston. The passengers seemed to be having a gay time of it, for we heard dance music going on.

CHAPTER XX.

MAKING A NIGHT OF IT.—ST. ANN'S BY DAYLIGHT.—A
PLANTER'S CLUB.—THE KOLA NUT.—THE BANANA
TRADE.—RUNAWAY BAY.—TROPICAL SWAMP FLOWERS.
—ADMIRABLE ROAD SYSTEM OF JAMAICA.

WE had a most delightful and most interesting day, but our end was not destined to be peace. We retired early to be ready for fresh adventures on the morrow. It was now that our evil things began; on investigation we found our beds to be as hard as cast iron, their usual characteristic in the West Indies, and we had forgotten to bring our rugs!

To this couch, such as it was, we had no choice but to commit ourselves, hoping for the best; "to sleep, perchance to dream—ay! there's the rub." The only item in this sanguine forecast which was realised, was the last named. Thanks to the nimble mosquito, and the crafty tick. The other two were frustrated by an unexpected concert. The horses which were the first of the orchestra to open it began to neigh and stamp; perhaps they were trying to explain that the guinea grass was out and that they wanted more, or that they would be thankful for a glass of iced water apiece. Just as this performance was becoming monotonous the dogs discovered that the boxes and barrels presented facilities for an obstacle race, and enlivened by much barking, the whole pack at one time seemed to be

in pursuit of a mongoose and gave tongue accordingly. Towards daybreak the cocks took to crowing as if their reputations depended on it, and soon afterwards the turkeys and guinea fowl completed the orchestra: finally we crept forth mere shadows of our former selves, all the poetry taken out of us, and "the rub" still our only consolation.

After breakfast we went down to the port, and were there accosted by a gentleman who introduced us to his club, charmingly situated, facing the sea and overhung with palms. He informed us that there were about seventy members, chiefly planters from the neighbourhood, whose metropolis is the town of St. Ann's. Some of them grow sugar, some coffee and cocoa. One of them has turned his attention to the kola nut, a hitherto little known production. It is not indigenous to Jamaica, but has been imported from the west coast of Africa. This tree has taken kindly to its new habitat and flourishes vigorously. There is nothing remarkable in its appearance, its leaves are eight inches long, and it bears yellow blossoms. Its value is in its seeds, which are ground up into a fine powder, and used like chocolate. The kola nut has wonderful sustaining powers, and enables men to undergo prolonged exertion without fatigue. On this account it has attracted the notice of military authorities. It would be invaluable on forced marches, and for the provisioning of flying columns, being as portable as chocolate, but ten times more nourishing. In proportion to bulk it is probably the most compact form of food in the world. Its admirers claim that it cures dyspepsia, and has a markedly beneficial effect on nervous disorders. My own experience confirms its

reputed power to dispel fatigue and restore exhausted energy. The nut itself has little or no flavour, but requires vanilla and sugar to render it palatable. It probably derives its remarkable properties from some alkaloid similar to cocaine,—but that is only a conjecture of my own. I have seen no analysis of it. Other planters devote themselves to horse and cattle raising, for which their park-like estates deep in rich guinea grass and shaded with clumps of trees, are well adapted. Much pains have been taken to introduce improved breeds. Herefords and Shorthorns seem the favourites, but I observed also many Spanish cattle from Andalusia, which I recognized at once, having often had occasion to admire the breed at Malaga and Seville. They are splendid animals, especially good for draught and ploughing.

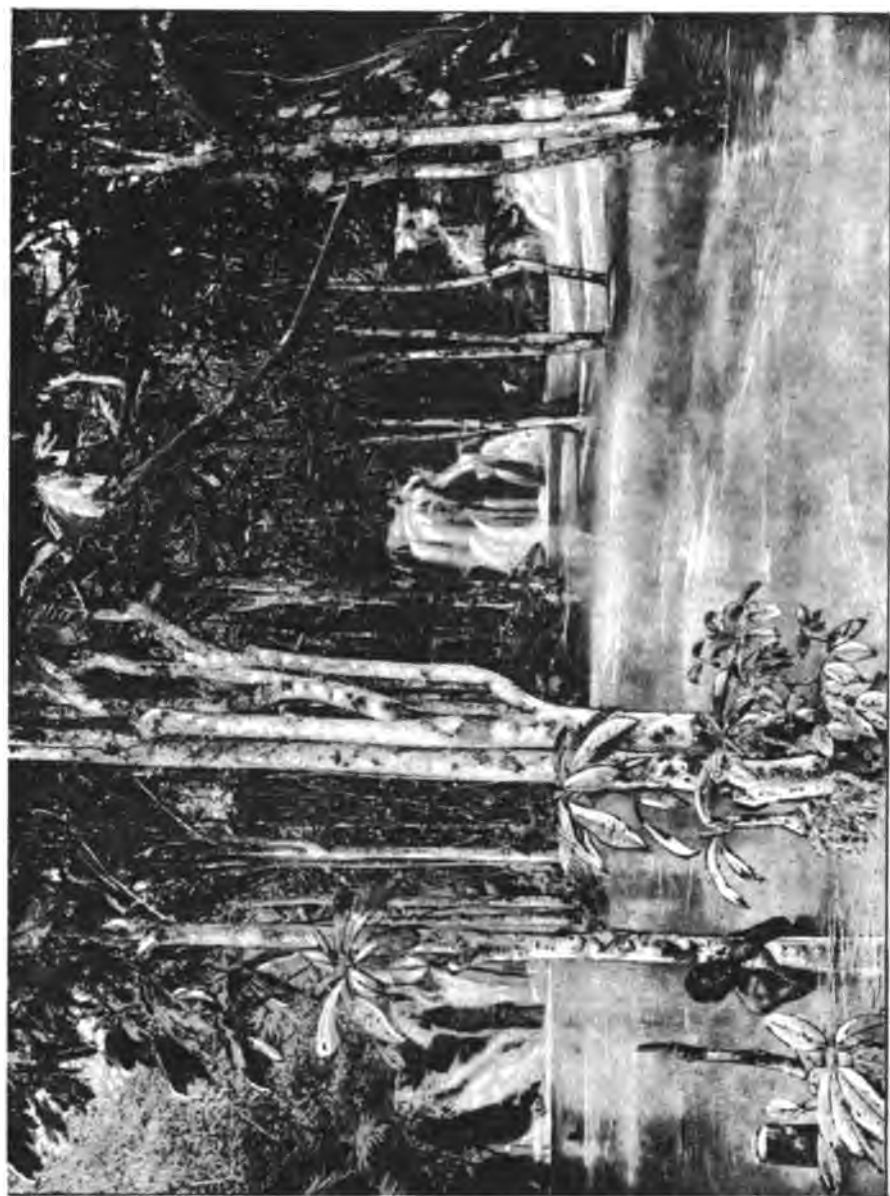
We visited the wharves from which are shipped bananas, a Jamaica product of rapidly increasing importance. Almost every bay round the 400 miles of Jamaica sea-coast has become a port of shipment for this valuable article of commerce. The demand appears inexhaustible, and there is not the least fear that the market will be overstocked. The use of this fruit is becoming extremely popular amongst the working classes throughout the United States; not as a luxury but as a most nutritious, palatable and convenient article of diet. They find it very sustaining, and I do not know any more agreeable form of farinaceous food. It is too solid to be popular as a dessert fruit, but I have often been thankful to get it when really hungry, and it is extremely wholesome and digestible.

After lunch we ordered our carriage and started on an excursion along the shore to Runaway Bay, so

named because it was from there that the last Spanish commander made his escape to Cuba when it became clear that the game in Jamaica was up, and all lost except honour.

I may mention here that a splendid macadamized road makes the complete circuit of the island, following the coast line except on the south, in the districts of St. Elizabeth and Manchester, where the mountains come down to the waters' edge and terminate in formidable precipices; here the road is perforce driven inland and passes behind the high ranges of Santa Cruz and Carpenter. I doubt whether any country of the same size and presenting such a rugged surface and so many engineering difficulties, is better supplied with highways of communication.

By the end of the current year the main road system will include 1760 miles of excellent and admirably engineered public roads; many of these will have been added during the reign of the present Governor, Sir Henry Blake, whose practical mind thoroughly realizes the vital importance to such a country as Jamaica of abundant communication between the interior and the coast, for vain would be the prodigal gifts of Nature, valueless the teeming products of rich valleys and hill-sides and grassy glades if there were no means of conveying them to market. We passed a continued succession of sugar estates and pasture lands divided into fields in English fashion, but there the resemblance ceased, for there were palm-trees in every hedge-row, and cocoa-nut groves in every corner; moreover they were backed by high mountain ranges, and the road-sides were adorned with many a flower only to be met in hothouses and as stove-plants at home. The very



ROARING RIVER. JAMAICA

hedges in Jamaica consist of cactus and wild pine-apples, the latter bearing bunches of fruit the size of plums, which when ripe are sweet and juicy and have the flavour of the cultivated pine. The cactus blossoms are some white, some yellow, and some crimson.

We met with numerous specimens of the graceful snow-white *Pancratium* lily in full blossom, growing within a stone's throw of the sea, and carried away some of the bulbs. At the water's edge were groves of that strange and curious product, the Mangrove-tree, supported upon arcades of roots like the body of a spider upon its long arching legs. The lower branches of these are crusted with a small variety of oyster most delicate and excellent to eat. They are also the favourite haunt of the violet crab.

In the swamps which we skirted we observed some lovely flowering shrubs, among them the *Portlandia grandiflora*, amidst the thick glossy foliage of which was an abundance of trumpet-shaped blossoms of the size of the Tiger Lily, but pure white, relieved by rose-pink ribs. Another shrub bore clusters of showy flowers of an intense crimson colour. Twining over these were everywhere the purple convolvulus and large white *Ippomœas*, also a kind of sweet pea of deep blue.

A most enticing little bay, with shelving strand and a pool protected from sharks by the intervention of a coral reef, proved an irresistible inducement for a dip. I therefore left our carriage round the corner and indulged in a delicious bathe in the tepid waters. I found here a particularly handsome conch shell which we took away with us; but subsequently abandoned because my wife complained that it reminded her of Brighton lodging-houses.

We came in the course of our drive to a crowd of estate hands who were being paid their week's wages. A picturesque group. I am told that the pay varies from 9d. to 1s. 6d. per day.

I should have liked to make nearer acquaintance with some of the estates, but although everything else in Jamaica has gone ahead since my previous visit, the old traditional hospitality of the planters has degenerated lamentably. On the occasion of my first visit I landed unexpectedly, and therefore possessed not a single letter of introduction, nor even so much as a letter of credit, yet all unknown to the planters as I was, they claimed me as their guest and made me free of their houses, and showed me over their plantations; so hearty and spontaneous was their hospitality that it seemed as if I might have lived at free quarters amongst them from that day to this. The difficulty was to get away. They would intercept a stranger and insist on bringing him home with them, not even enquiring his name.

But of that generation few are left, and new men have brought with them new manners. A limited group of gentlemen and ladies came out to be present at the opening of the Jamaica Exhibition. One would have thought that on such an exceptional occasion, those who had travelled 5,000 miles to visit their island would have been claimed as the guests of the island, and that the houses of the planters would have been thrown open to them. But though the planters met them at Government-house balls and banquets, polo matches, cricket matches, race meetings, &c., there was no disposition to cultivate nearer acquaintance with the strangers from the Old Country. A kind of Japanese exclusiveness seems to have taken

the place of the open-hearted cordiality of former days.

The only exceptions I observed were in one or two instances in which there had been previous acquaintance, and one case, that of Mr. M——x and his family, who belong to the old stock.

We met with much courtesy and kindness from the European official class, but they are merely temporary residents. The remarks I have made above apply to the planters only. I should not have mentioned the subject, but as I am drawing a contrast between the old times and the new, I cannot well omit reference to it.

A drive along the coast well illustrates the aptness of the old Indian name for Jamaica—the land of springs—for on the north side of the island one has to cross a stream at every few hundred yards, and the cost to the country in bridges must have been serious.

In the course of our afternoon drive we crossed Church River, Parson's Gully, Stoney River, Cave Gully, Laughland's Little River, Laughland's Great River, Cistern River, Flatpoint River, Pear Tree Gully and Pear Tree Bottom Rivers. The last-named are a group of three, lumped together for economy of nomenclature.

The previous afternoon between Ocho Rios and St. Ann's we crossed Ocho Rios River, Cave River, Dunn's River, Roaring River, Little River, Harbridge's Gully, Spanish Lookout River, St. Ann's Great River, Negro River.

The terms gully and river seem synonymous, unless it be that gully means a river bed which occasionally runs dry.

The excursion was a delightful one, and the scenery

throughout interesting ; between the mountains and the sea a rich and rolling plain intervenes, ever varying and changing its aspect.

We got back to St. Ann's at sunset, and after dinner we heard congregational singing going on in a neighbouring chapel. The effect was very pleasing—the performers were all coloured people. The African race are fond of music, and having correct ears, sing together in perfect harmony.

Next morning we returned to Moneague by a different road—a continuous succession of beautiful mountain scenery, with lovely glimpses of the sea as we wound our way up the valley to a height of a couple of thousand feet, and passed through a small picturesquely situated town called Claremont. It was market day, and here as elsewhere there was an excellent market hall and the same animated congregation of natives I have already described at Moneague.

By this route Brownstown and Stuarttown can be reached. They are said to be well worth a visit, but we had promised to return to King's House for a particular event, and had not time to visit these localities.

CHAPTER XXI.

A WEST INDIAN RACE MEETING.—UP PARK CAMP.—POLO MATCHES.—A FETE ON BOARD THE FLEET.

DESIRING to see Jamaica life in all its phases, we attended a race meeting at a place called Cumberland Pen ; it is situated not far from the high road between Kingston and Spanish Town, but has to be reached by fording a river. When we arrived at the bank a negro groom mounted on a stout horse dashed across from the other side and hooked on to our pole unicorn fashion, and thus were we tugged across, plunging and diving about over the uneven river bottom in a very tipsy fashion, and as the water rose considerably above the axles there seemed to be a good chance of a Sitz bath.

This excitement over we reached the course, which like many other accessories of the meeting differed considerably from European surroundings. It had a fringe of tropical vegetation and an unrivalled background of stately mountain ranges which overhung it to the north. Then as for the *dramatis personæ*, it was surrounded by a black crowd, and the racers were ridden by black jockeys. How a frequenter of Newmarket would have stared at the latter ! They wore the usual jockey caps, gay silk jackets and knee breeches, but their feet were bare, and in bare feet they rode with spurs on their naked ebony heels ; moreover, several of

them were decidedly stout. One reminded me of the Pickwickian fat boy and another of Dickens's Traddles. The first was preposterously fat, and so round that when his friends hoisted him into the saddle he rolled off like a ball on the other side. This indecent obesity was the less excusable because the climate offered every facility for that process so dear to poor Archer—sweating, which could be accomplished without any adventitious aids from flannels or padded overcoats—in fact, you need not leave your chair; sit and wink hard and you will speedily perspire.

My readers will not be surprised to learn that neither of the fat boys rode the winning horses. Some of the negro jockeys looked slim and business-like enough, they rode well, and understood their horses. Several of the races were closely contested, and most of the horses were a credit to Jamaica. The winners had all been trained by an officer of an English Hussar regiment. The course was overlooked by an extensive grand stand on which was congregated all that was most brilliant and fashionable in Jamaican society. The benches were filled with the official, military, naval, planter and mercantile aristocracy of the island; a box in the centre was occupied by his Excellency the Governor and his party. There were also some English visitors of rank and two ex-M.P.'s. Between the events I left the stand and dived down into the crowd below to see what I could of native life. The darkies were a merry, good-humoured lot, and men, women and girls were enjoying themselves thoroughly. The coloured women wore hats and feathers, and their smartest frocks; some were so ill-advised as to venture on fashionable bonnets. Nothing can become them worse; they are better in

hats ; but best of all wearing bright-coloured handkerchiefs twisted round their heads turban fashion. But on such an occasion they would die sooner than be seen in anything so unfashionable. The men wore billycock hats and cloth coats.

At some distance from the grand stand was an extensive refreshment shed, where the coloured population clustered like bees ; the favourite drink appeared to be an aerated compound resembling British ginger beer, but dignified by the imposing title of Rhapsodia (negroes love a long word) ; which was consumed in combination with rum. I suspect the latter was more productive of rhapsody than the former.

I was amused to observe that some well-meaning Temperance Society had plastered the trees and posts opposite the Palace of Rhapsody with slips of paper, bearing in large capital letters the warning inscription : " Rum Ruins." Some of these warnings had even been affixed to the shed itself, while the owners were not looking. The only perceptible result was that a multitude of people seemed bent on testing upon their own persons the accuracy of the statement. It is only fair to add, however, that I did not see a single individual actually tipsy.

We attended another race meeting at Up Park Camp near the Exhibition. It consisted of pony races, ridden by gentlemen riders, which proved very amusing. Amongst other events was an umbrella and cigar race. The competitors were required to come to the starting-point, leading their ponies, and carrying their saddles, an umbrella and a cigar ; at a given signal they were to saddle their ponies, light their cigars, unfurl their umbrellas and get away as quickly as they could, each

candidate starting the instant he had accomplished all these operations.

The difficulties of the performance were increased by a high wind, which soon turned their umbrellas inside out and blew a stream of cigar sparks up their noses. One of the gentlemen was thrown heavily, but he gallantly mounted again quick as lightning, and came in the winner amid vociferous cheering and waving of handkerchiefs. I was informed that although the gentlemen rode their own polo ponies, they did not carry their own umbrellas, but borrowed them from confiding friends. They were probably lent with a light heart, but came back to their owners in such questionable shape as to be past recognition.

Up Park Camp furnishes the arena for most of the sporting events of every kind that find favour with Jamaica society. During our stay at King's House an intercolonial Polo Tournament was inaugurated in honour of the Prince, the interest in which was greatly enhanced by the fact that H.R.H. was one of the players on the Jamaican side. He threw himself into the contest with characteristic spirit and energy, and contributed not a little to the winning of the laurels which crowned the efforts of the Jamaica champions.

There had been a drought of several months' duration which had rendered the course sandy as the Sahara, and the match was played amid a medium of dust which made it difficult even for the players to discern the ball, and rendered it as rare an apparition for the spectators as a meteor or a comet. The upper portions only of the combatants and their steeds were discernible; the lower had to be taken on trust, reminding one of pictures of mediæval battles. Up Park Camp was also the arena

for intercolonial cricket matches, and furnished in fact the Ranelagh and the Hurlingham of Jamaica society, where all the beauty and all the brilliant costumes of the Colony were to be seen; around these shoals of young fellows fluttered on horseback and on foot like moths about an electric light; Lieutenants and Captains of the army and the fleet, young officials in the civil service and the *jeunesse* of the planter class, not without a dash of the foreign element, for there was the Russian ironclad already mentioned, whose captain declared that the Jamaica ladies had turned the heads of his subalterns, and that he must take them out to sea to recover their senses. There were dark rumours that his real motive was to hang certain culprits of his crew whom he was not allowed to string up in port.

The colonel and officers of the West India Regiment whose barracks adjoined the camp were most hospitable and attentive, both to the fair visitors at Up Park Camp and to the gentlemen who accompanied them. They must have spent a fortune in teas for the former, and B.'s and S.'s and cigars for the latter. Right good fellows all were they, from the colonel to the youngest ensign.

While on the subject of fêtes, I may here mention one that was given on board the fleet, H.R.H. being present. The festive proceedings took place on board the *Bellerophon*, the flagship of the Admiral, who kindly sent a couple of steam-launches, big enough for moderate-sized yachts, to bring the King's House party on board. There was a sumptuous banquet amidships, followed by a tea on the quarter-deck, and a general invasion of *all* the decks by the ladies, to see the big

guns, and to take a squint at the photographs that adorned the officers' state-rooms; one or other of them may have represented the life's romance of a gallant son of Neptune—at all events the possibility imparted interest.

Amongst the incidents was the firing of a submarine mine. The daughter of the Governor was invited to do this; she was instructed to press an electric button, which she did, and instantaneously there arose 500 yards off a mountain of water crested with a vast plume of spray, which shot into the air to a height of about 100 feet.

As soon as the tumult of waters had subsided the surface of the sea was observed to be covered with hundreds of dead fish of all sizes—slain by the shock.

I was informed that amongst these victims of naval warfare was a shark, but I must confess I was not fortunate enough to see him. On our way back to shore we steamed through the scene of carnage. A submarine mine is a first-class contrivance for fishing—but too expensive, I doubt, for everyday use.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PLAIN OF LIGUANEA.—CONDITION OF ITS INHABITANTS.
—SPANISH TOWN.—EXCURSION THROUGH THE VALLEY
OF THE RIO COBRE.

DURING our stay with them their Excellencies on one occasion most kindly placed Government House, Spanish Town, at our disposal as a starting point for an excursion up the Rio Cobre. Our route to it lay along an excellent road for thirteen miles across the great alluvial plain of Liguanea. We thus had an opportunity of observing the condition of the natives in this low-lying district, and of comparing them with the mountaineers. There are no marked differences between them. They are equally well dressed, and both equally give one the idea of material prosperity.

We passed many homesteads with the usual accompaniments of banana and palm groves, coffee shrubs, cocoa, and sugar-cane. Their live stock consisted of many goats, with the fecundity of which I was struck, for the Nannies were often the proud mammas of three kids apiece. Pigs of a small black breed resembling Berkshires were also numerous; they all seem bent on fulfilling their duty of getting fat as fast as they can manage it. Both pigs and goats presented a whimsical appearance, due to large wooden triangles fixed around their necks to prevent them getting through neighbours' fences, or straying into the bush.

One object which used to be an invariable feature in

negro provision grounds at the time of my first visit at Jamaica I missed now. I refer to the Calabash tree. Formerly the hard rind of its fruits was used to make all the household vessels, now the negroes are well enough off to buy bowls and basins and similar articles at the nearest crockery-shop in town. Specimens of the Calabash still occur accidentally here and there, but its occupation is gone, it is no longer a feature of Jamaican peasant life.

Many parts of the plain were swampy and covered with log-wood trees, which resemble acacias and have a profusion of yellow blossoms. Less abundant were the handsome *lignum vitæ* trees, which at this season of the year are covered with star-shaped flowers of a lovely deep blue, and beneath which was a dense undergrowth, including a magnificent swamp fern, from the spores of which it is stated a kind of bread can be made.

On this road occurs the great *Ceiba* or buttress tree immortalized in "Tom Cringle's Log," and still known as Tom Cringle's tree. We passed under its wide-spreading branches covered with *Tillandsias* and other parasites. These giants are of solitary habit, and always occur singly and at long intervals; I have never seen them grouped together. Cocoa palms are not allowed to overhang the road, for fear of the nuts falling and fracturing the wayfarer's skull.

Wild pine-apples formed another constituent of the undergrowth in the woods which we passed through, as also cactus and cereus.

The road was enlivened by the usual processions of women balancing on their heads every kind of market produce, from eggs to pigs. There were also baskets of fruit in great variety, sapodillas, pine-apples, star-

apples, alligator-pears, custard-apples, melons, bananas, and a legion of others.

Negro women are very sociable, and walk in groups chattering and laughing all the while, but though they keep together they march in single file lest collisions should occur and their precariously balanced wares be upset and scattered.

We met many buggies; these vehicles are of American origin, but have now been universally adopted as a Jamaican institution. They are light carriages mounted on hickory wheels, and furnished with a hood, which shelters not only the occupants of the interior but projects over the coach-box so as to extend its protection to the driver.

Spanish Town Government House occupies one side of a public square devoted to official life. Its cut stone façade is handsome, having a massive portico supported on Doric columns; its interior characteristic is vastness. The entrance hall, banqueting hall, ball-room, and reception rooms are all on a large scale, with lofty ceilings; and as we were the only occupants except the servants, we felt like very small church mice turned loose into an empty cathedral of huge dimensions. Every sound produced such alarming echoes that we were almost afraid to stir; however, our courage revived again after a good dinner which the housekeeper had ready for us.

The south side of the square is occupied by a dome-shaped structure, beneath which is a statue of Rodney, the well-known hero of a memorable and decisive sea-fight.

The garden in the centre is protected by spiked iron rails and laid out with a variety of trees and flowering shrubs.

When we left this square and plunged into the interior of the town we found that we had turned our backs on all that was presentable in it ; we were entangled in a labyrinth of narrow streets, the most thriving institutions in which were grog shops and one or two stores, but the stores bore the same numerical proportion to the Bacchanalian establishments that Falstaff's bread bore to his sack.

Spanish Town had manifestly seen better days, but the centre of Jamaica life has now shifted to Kingston, and the old metropolis has damped off and got the die back, not, however, without hopes of recovery.

In the evening we were visited by a cousin of ours who has an appointment here, and by an official to whom their Excellencies had thoughtfully written on our behalf.

Next morning we made an early start and soon left the plain behind us, and crossing the bridge over the Rio Cobre entered a valley the picturesque beauty of which cannot be exaggerated.

The course of the river is marked by feathery bamboos interspersed with palms and bananas. Let my reader imagine the great palm house at Kew popped down by some geni of the Arabian Nights alongside the water, the cover taken off and the contents left standing in the open air ; he may thus imagine a little bit of the vegetation along the banks of the Rio Cobre, but let him not picture to himself a monotonous repetition of this ; on the contrary the scenery is infinitely varied. The hillsides abound in star-apple trees with glittering foliage, green above and purple underneath ; this noble fruit tree grows wild and abundantly throughout the valley. The fruit is hand-

some, with a purple rind and a pulp of gelatinous consistence. The section of a star-apple when ripe presents a well-defined star, in the angles of which are glossy black pips.

The valley narrows at one or two points, and nearly perpendicular rocks take the place of the sloping sides ; at a pass or gorge called Gibraltar they seem almost to meet, but every shelf of the precipices is a garden of flowering shrubs, and is festooned with trailing convolvulus and other climbing and creeping plants.

Shortly afterwards a light and graceful iron bridge thrown across the narrow valley at a high level, spans the river. The view from it looking down upon the succession of rapids of which the gorge here consists, is most striking, overhung as the roaring torrent is by the splendid vegetation which characterises its course ; the view back into the rocky gorge already described is one of picturesque grandeur.

The twelve miles' drive through this fairy-like valley is an experience never to be forgotten, and I feel a personal animosity against and cannot sufficiently execrate the memory of that individual of grovelling mind and leaden imagination who christened such a vision of beauty "Bog Walk."

We emerged at the end upon a hilly country dominated by high mountains. There is also a picturesque little hotel in which a botanist or an artist, or even an enthusiastic lover of nature might spend a couple of days very happily in cultivating a nearer acquaintance with the glories I have attempted to describe—a desperate enterprise in which I feel that I have failed miserably. My only consolation is that no one else has yet succeeded.

CHAPTER XXIII.

EXCURSION TO MANDEVILLE.—ASPECT OF THE INTERVENING COUNTRY.—BROOK'S HOTEL.—LIVELY COLONIALS.
—A WORD ABOUT TICKS.—A CANINE CONCERT.

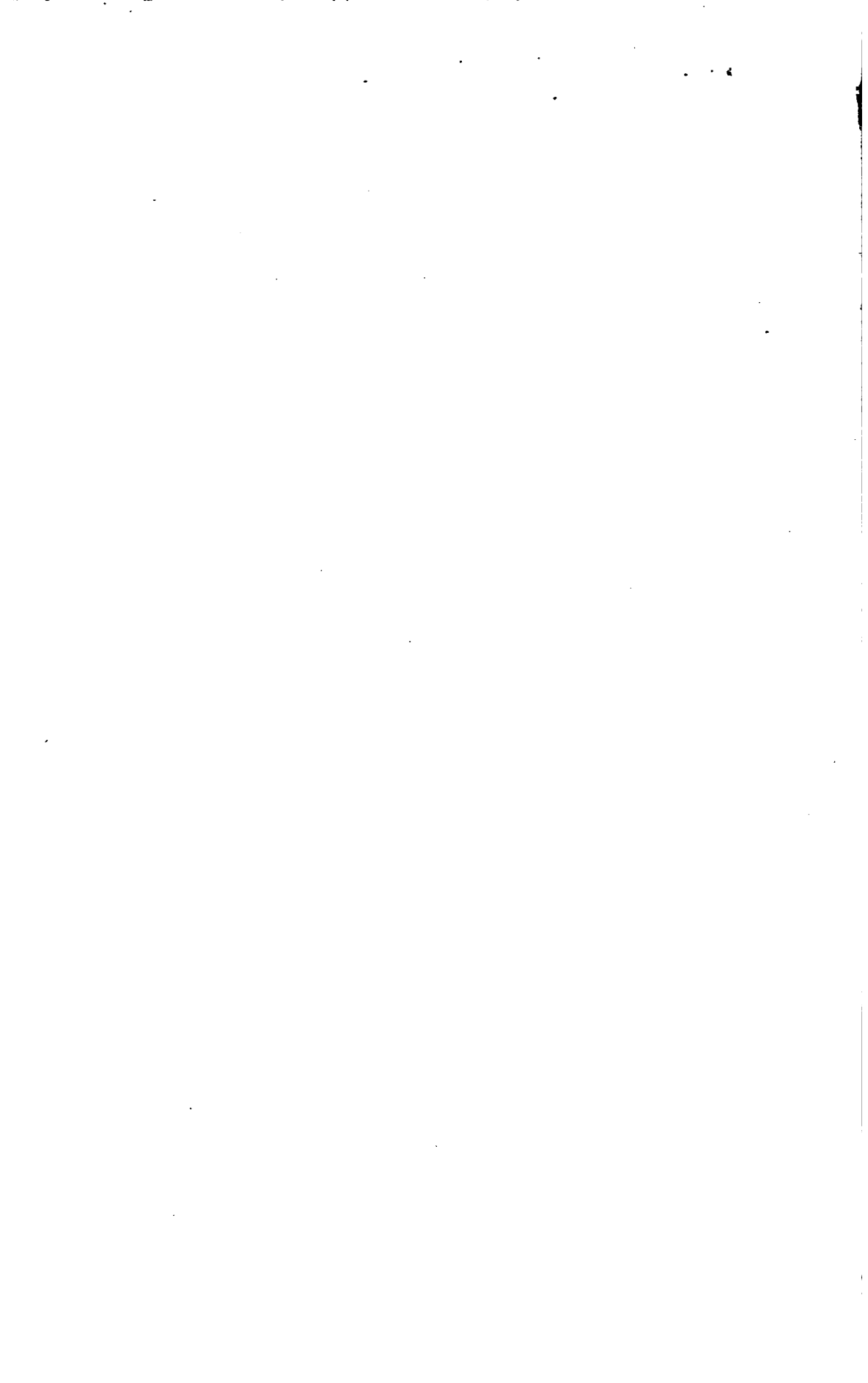
WISHING to explore the south-western quarter of Jamaica, we one day took the earliest morning train from Kingston for the town of Porus, the present terminus of the railway system. It extends beyond that point to Williamsfield, but this extension was not in working order. Ultimately it will be pushed forward to Montego Bay, thus completing communication by rail between the northern and southern shores of the island. The distance from Kingston to Montego, following the sinuous course which interposing mountain ranges will compel the line to take, is about 120 miles.

The country continues to be comparatively level until May Pen is reached; the railway then enters a wide valley bounded to the north by the Mocha Mountains, and to the south by the May Day Mountains.

The mouths of the Rio Cobre are passed, and near Cumberland Pen a canal is crossed which taps the Rio Cobre, and carries its waters by a straight and direct course into Hunt's Bay opposite Fort Augusta; the line then passes at the back of the Healthshire Hills, and through the swampy plain significantly christened "Salt Pond District," to Spanish Town; continuing westward, Colbourne's Gully, Bowring's Gully, and



TOM CRINGLE'S TREE, NEAR SPANISH TOWN



Clarendon Gully are traversed. These rivers make their way to the sea through the saline marshes that here fringe the coast. Bridge Pen, Cole's Pen, Lloyd's Pen, and a number of other pens are passed; and here I may explain for the benefit of the uninitiated, that pen is Jamaican for farm. I conjecture that they began by being cattle pens, though subsequently some of them became sugar estates.

The valley slowly contracts until Clarendon Park is reached; this is the starting point along an excellent road for some mineral springs of extraordinary efficacy in rheumatic complaints. They are situated near the mouth of the Milk River, and when suitable accommodation is provided for invalids, they will be much resorted to. The existing lodging houses are of the roughest. Hotel there is none.

We had telegraphed to Mandeville for a travelling carriage, which we found in waiting at Porus Station. As we drove up the valley we saw the embankments and cuttings for the railway extension to Montego Bay zigzagging up the mountain side. The line which has to win its way to greater and yet greater altitudes until the summit of the Pass is attained, over which it is to be carried to Montego Bay, reminded me of the Sömmering Railway between Trieste and Vienna, only that the mountains are clad from head to foot in robes of the richest tropical verdure trimmed with flowers in inexhaustible variety.

Our road continued past mountains and over hill and dale until we reached Mandeville, and were deposited at a presentable-looking little two-storied hotel with verandahs above and below. The landlady gave us the only unoccupied room she had, which was on

the ground floor and beneath the saloon. This last circumstance turned out to be a misfortune, as will presently appear.

A better dinner was served than could have been expected in such an out-of-the-way locality among the Highlands of Jamaica. Our messmates consisted of a very lively party of Canadians, smartly-dressed beaux and pretty girls, and one young married lady to chaperone the others. The latter was very fair and quite a beauty, but I fear an incorrigible flirt; indeed, we were rather amused at the attempts of her young charges to keep her in order. Whenever they thought she was being carried away too much by her high spirits, they would frown and shake their heads and even tread on her pretty little feet under the table.

We had had a long day and retired early, but, unluckily, the Canadians started a dance in the saloon immediately over our heads, no ceiling intervening to deaden sound. They delighted especially in the Cuban Polka, the most characteristic feature of which is violent stamping on the part of the performers. When this was over the dogs began a barking chorus in front of the hotel, which was immediately responded to from far and near by the curs of low degree in which every Jamaican town abounds.

Mandeville is surrounded by a number of isolated hills, on the summit of almost everyone of which is a villa. We spent a day in climbing these, one after another, and thus obtained charming views, and inspected some lovely gardens.

In the neighbourhood of one of these romantic retreats stood a handsome flowering tree, littered underneath with the blossoms it had shed. While we were

examining the latter, the owner of the villa joined us, and began a conversation, taking care all the time not to come beneath the tree. We continued to discuss various Jamaican topics for about twenty minutes, at the end of which he observed casually, "You may not be aware that the grass beneath that tree swarms with ticks." We cast a horrified and indignant glance at him, few adieux were spoken, and we hastily descended the hill; alas! too late, mischief was done that only ammonia could remedy, and there was nothing for it but to hurry home and anoint ourselves forthwith. For the instruction of the uninitiated, I may mention that these so-called ticks are minute little creatures similar to those which are found in the harvest fields in England. They are so small that it requires good eyes to see them, but when they have once "got the run" of their victim's skin, they bury themselves beneath it and cause an amount of irritation out of all proportion to their size. Strong ammonia immediately applied is an effectual remedy. They are not found everywhere but only in certain localities, and in certain kinds of grass and herbage which experienced natives take care to avoid. Another larger variety is called the silver-tick, which is exactly like our sheep-tick. This last-named parasite after boring his way into the skin grows and thrives, becoming more and more corpulent at the expense of his unwilling host, unless his career is promptly cut short by extraction with a needle. I was told of these, but in all my wanderings in the West Indies I never was attacked by one.

Mandeville is noted for its oranges. They are also produced of excellent quality in various parts of the

island, and there is some export trade in them. They thrive only in the mountains, the plain and the lower valleys being too hot for them. Even were it otherwise they could not compete with the banana, which requires less attention, pays better and suffers less in transit. Bananas need no packing nor packing cases; whereas oranges have to be carefully handled, for if bruised they are ruined; each fruit must be wrapped in a separate paper envelope, and placed in a properly constructed case. This minute care would not suit the humour of the coloured people at all. For this reason they are chiefly grown for home consumption, not systematically in groves, as in Florida, but scattered about in a casual sort of way.

There are many grassy spots in the neighbourhood of Mandeville, and much cattle are raised there.

Nature carries the tropical vegetation of the plains far up into the mountains, and ridges 4000 feet high are seen to be fringed with cocoa palms and bamboos. At this altitude the thermometer descends occasionally to 50° at night, a temperature far below that which any English gardener would allow to occur in his hot-houses. But then frost is unknown. A single night's frost would annihilate almost the entire vegetation of Jamaica.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ALPINE JAMAICA.—A SUMMER CHALET.—A RECTOR AND
HIS BLACK SHEEP.—NEWCASTLE.—WARRIORS WITH
DOMESTIC TASTES.—THE MONGOOSE.

ON one occasion their Excellencies invited us to accompany them for a few days to their summer residence situated in the Blue Mountains at a considerable elevation.

Our route lay up the valley of the Hope River as far as Gordontown, the terminus at which the carriage road ceases; beyond that the journey must be continued on horseback or on foot along bridle paths, often skirting precipitous slopes and alarmingly steep for those not inured to Alpine adventure.

The first section of our experiences consisted of a most charming and luxurious drive along the side of the valley at a comparatively high level above the river, and commanding striking views of its course. The trough which it has cut for itself through the rocks is fringed with bamboos, aloes with flowering stems thirty feet high, bananas, palms and splendid mango trees, not unlike sweet chestnuts. Here and there occur negro huts and provision grounds. At Gordontown there is a collection of stores and a livery stable, and near it is the residence of the Commander of the forces which I shall have occasion to describe later on. We were met here by the saddle horses on which the

journey was to be continued. As we ascended the steep, winding bridle path the scenery grew wilder and wilder, and the pictures formed by mountain peaks and verdant valleys were ever changing like the combinations of a kaleidoscope.

Craigton is a villa situated upon one of the ridges of the Blue Mountains; it is embosomed amid lovely gardens, and over trellises and outbuildings climb the deep orange-coloured *Bignonia venusta* and purple Bougainvilleas.

Conspicuous objects in the flower-beds are some magnificent double-flowering Poinsettias of the most brilliant scarlet. There was also a Gardenia bush as large as a Rhododendron tree and covered with flowers; what buttonhole bouquets could have been culled from it! What a mine of wealth it would have been to a London nurseryman during the London season! There was also a profusion of roses, which seem to do extremely well in Jamaica.

The grounds command splendid panoramas extending to the Caribbean Sea. The view is similar to that from Stoney Hill already described, except that the elevation is greater.

The rector of the parish, Mr. McDermot, together with his wife, joined the dinner circle the evening of our arrival. He is a man of considerable ability and grasp of mind, and his conversation was most interesting and instructive. His flock are chiefly coloured, and he gave me his impressions of the African race, based upon his experience both of the adults and of the children who attend the national school. With regard to the latter he said they were as quick and intelligent as European children up to the age of twelve, but then their mental

development seems suddenly to be arrested, and they continue to be tinged often through life with a certain amount of the childishness of that age and also with its defective power of control. The adults are devout church and chapel goers, and religious instincts are strong in them, but their morality leaves much to be desired. He agreed with me that during the last twenty-five years their material condition had improved very much and was still improving, as also had their disposition and manners ; I have already said elsewhere that the contrast in these respects had struck me extremely on the renewal of my acquaintance with Jamaica.

The ridge upon which Craigton is perched terminates in an eminence which juts out precipitously into the valley below and forms a striking and commanding site for the parish church ; on the way to it stands the national school, which we visited. It is furnished with the usual apparatus of blackboards, school benches, and desks, but it was holiday time, and the children who would have formed the most interesting feature in the visit were not there.

We next explored the cemetery which surrounds the church, the graves in which were overhung with the crimson blossoms of Hibiscus and other flowering shrubs ; upon a board was painted an appeal not to steal the flowers from God's Acre. Below the church is a shed in which were stabled the various quadrupeds on which the more distant members of the congregation had ridden to service ; men and women, lads and lassies alike, all ages and sexes ride here.

The vice-regal party arrived as the bell ceased tolling, and we took our places. The congregation were coloured, very devout and very attentive and decorous.

There was a choir—all little innocent blacknesses, as Charles Lamb said of the London sweeps—and looking the blacker for their snowy surplices. It is a hopeful feature about the African race that they are so musical; they have good ears and soft voices and keep good time. Mr. McDermot gave us an excellent sermon, good enough for St. James's, Piccadilly, much better than is often heard there. I could not help moralizing upon the perversity of fate which stranded so eloquent a man here, while often placing some young incapable in London pulpits to preach the prosiest and coldest of discourses to the most intellectual audiences in the world. However, it is good for those black sheep in the wilderness to have so able a pastor, and if the sermon was slightly out of their reach they listened at all events with rapt attention and received benefit, let us hope, by some process of absorption other than mental logic.

From this hill the military health station of Newcastle may be seen glittering in the sun, apparently quite near as the crow flies, but nowhere is the discrepancy between the bird and pedestrian more serious than in the Blue Mountains. I speak from experience, for next day I undertook to walk thither. Alas! what ups and downs and devious paths intervened, *heu quantus sudor*, what perspirations! It was cool on the breezy summit, but a very vapour bath down in those romantic-looking abysses into which one gazed from Church Hill.

My Jamaican friends remonstrated—walking was an unheard of proceeding. When they found advice and warning vain, they watched my retreating figure as if I had been told off on a forlorn hope. It was aggravating

that the first stage of the ascent was a steep descent of a thousand feet or so ; that was a demoralizing circumstance which the hero of Excelsior had not to face. It was like climbing down into a caldron. I soon dipped below the range of the trade wind, and had the benefit of a vertical sun unimpaired by any friendly draught. The bottom of the caldron constituted a Turkish bath gratis. I met many natives there, all glossy and perspiring, beneath arcades of palm and banana leaves of the most vigorous and flourishing growth. The solitary grogshop was surrounded by a thirsty crowd. Near by was a West Indian institution called a barbecue. This has nothing to do with the culinary substantive of the same name, but it is a kind of tray on a large scale constructed of cement, and forming part of the machinery of coffee estates. Into this the fleshy berries containing the coffee pips are thrown to dry. That is the first process. While reposing in the barbecue the berries are stirred from time to time until the juicy envelope has shrivelled and dried, they are then placed in a decorticating mill and shelled. All that remains after that is to pick out the imperfect pips and pack the coffee for export.

Notwithstanding the heat, the walk proved very interesting from a botanical point of view. I may add that many observations of native life and ways were added to my *repertoire*. The military station above has to be supplied with all necessities and luxuries *viâ* this route ; everything has to be carried up either on women's heads or on pack animals—mules and horses. Many picturesque groups were passing to and fro, and wending their way along the narrow, crooked bridle paths by which the ascent was to be won.

As one emerged from the abyss-like valley and came within range of the trade wind the temperature cooled rapidly. When at last Newcastle was reached, it felt like fresh English spring weather. One stood here at an altitude of about 4,000 feet, and the panorama presented by the amphitheatre of Blue Mountain peaks was very fine. Some of them towered several thousand feet above the station; they bounded the view on three sides. The fourth was occupied by lower mountains which descended in a succession of ranges until the great plain of Liguanea was reached; beyond that the horizon of the Caribbean Sea was so remote that it was impossible to discern where the water ended and the sky began. The limits were lost in the purple distance.

Newcastle itself consists of various military buildings. The soldiers who have wives and families live in detached cottages, there are barracks for the single men, mess rooms, canteen, orderly rooms and hospitals, store houses for ammunition and other warlike adjuncts. There were also cannon of various calibres; one of these weighed a ton and a half, and there was an inscription recording the feat performed by a sergeant and thirty men who hauled it up along the mountain paths from the plains below—a task worthy of Hercules. I had just found it pretty hard work hauling myself up, and was therefore the better qualified to appreciate the prowess of the gallant fellows.

The sons of Mars here devote themselves much to gardening, in which operations they are assisted by their wives and children. Indeed the scene was quite Arcadian. I saw sundry broad-shouldered, sunburnt warriors engaged in planting cabbage seedlings in neat rows, their wives, many of them fresh-looking young

women, who one would judge had only just arrived from Kent, held bundles of seedlings in their arms and handed them one by one to their spouses to stick in. Men, women and children all looked the picture of health, and there were many filles and fils du régiment.

Occasionally balls are given by the officers which have the advantage of exemption from all but the youngest and most active chaperones, for none but those qualified for alpine climbing on horseback can get there. The ladies of the regiment do their visiting on horseback. The surrounding hills contain coffee plantations, or villa residences occupied by the families of men of business who go backwards and forwards to their country houses, etc., but although Newcastle is not entirely devoid of social resources, I need scarcely add that it is a very scattered neighbourhood.

On my way back to Craigton I came upon an excited crowd of Africans, men, women and children, in front of the grogshop before mentioned ; amongst them were one or two redcoats from the neighbouring garrison. I found that the interest centred round an unfortunate mongoose which had been trapped and brought there in a bird cage to make sport for the dusky philistines ; near by were a couple of bull terriers between whom it was to be turned down and worried to death. The mongoose is a graceful little beast shaped like a polecat ; it has bright, intelligent eyes and a pretty head, is endowed with undaunted pluck, and will fight to the last against any odds.

I did my best to save it from the impending barbarity, and invited the negroes who owned it to name their price, but they said they would not sell it at any price, as it would disappoint all the people who had congre-

gated to witness the sport. One of the soldiers was indignant at this refusal, and seizing the cage hurled it, mongoose and all, down a ravine.

The darkies, however, quickly retrieved it, none the worse apparently for its violent shaking, and opening the door of the cage turned it out between the two dogs. One of them seized it by the shoulders, the other by the loins, and a tug of war began, which one might have expected to dislocate every joint of the poor wretch's spine, but its resources were not yet exhausted; it drove its sharp teeth through the tongue of one of its tormentors, who straightway spat it out; it then turned like lightning and seized its remaining foe by the snout. The dog shook his head violently, let go his hold, and the mongoose bolted and would have escaped but that it was headed by the crowd. I felt so disgusted at this cowardly disregard for fair play that I marched away indignantly, not wishing to see the end.

I mention this incident because the mongoose has become quite a political question in Jamaica, and legislation on the subject is imminent; it was originally introduced to destroy snakes and rats, the depredations of the latter amongst the sugar cane having become a serious evil. It did what was expected of it, it extirpated snakes entirely, so that it is doubtful whether a specimen is left in the island; it also thinned out the rats to an important extent. Unfortunately it increased and multiplied to such an extent itself as to become a greater evil than snakes and rats combined, for these articles of its commissariat having failed, it sought substitutes, and found the most eligible and the handiest to be chickens—no hen roost was safe from it; it also has a passion for eggs. This entailed upon

it the curses and detestation of every cottager in the island, especially the housewives whose pin-money depends on their poultry; they consequently show a mongoose no quarter, and think no cruelty too great to expiate its misdeeds. I am told that they commonly dip it in paraffin, set it on fire, and turn it loose to terrify its fellows. Before I left Kingston notice of motion had been given by a member of the Legislative Council relating to rewards for its destruction. The original pair were imported from India, but its treatment in its new home has been of the most inhospitable.

CHAPTER XXV.

A TROPICAL WOOD NYMPH.—RAYMOND HALL AND ITS
APPROACHES.—COCOA CULTIVATION.—OLD-FASHIONED
HOSPITALITY.—REMINISCENCES.

ONE would have thought that the bridle path to Newcastle had attained the maximum of up and down-ishness, but I was destined to be undeceived; next day the gentlemen of the party set out on horseback to visit some friends who live on the summit of a neighbouring sugar loaf.

I preferred walking, as it enabled me better to examine the botanical productions en route. The name of the villa or bungalow was Raymond Hall; it was pointed out to me from the vicinity of Craigton, and looking across the intervening valleys it appeared about half an hour off, a mere hop, skip and jump, but the intervening region turned out to be the most crumpled morsel of Jamaica I had yet had experience of.

I was carefully instructed as to the way I should go. I was to dive down the declivity beyond the church until I came to a point where three paths met, and then to take the left-hand one. When I arrived at the grand junction thus indicated I found to my confusion that there were four paths. I was too literal and took the most left-hand one, which after sundry ups and downs through the thickest of thickets landed me in a cul de sac occupied by a native cottage and provision ground.

I was welcomed in by an African Venus, all smiles and civility. The wood nymphs here are of various intermediate complexions between ebony and satinwood. When she understood that I had lost my way she locked her house and said she would personally conduct me. En route, she gave much instructive information about native life and manners. Finally we emerged into the open. She pointed out a ridge which I was to make for, then a cone about 1,000 feet high I was to climb, then a valley I was to descend, then a still taller sugar loaf which I was to surmount, following a zigzag path which was visible from where we stood. Then did I see beyond—a saddle-shaped ridge in the centre of which was a gigantic ceiba tree standing head and shoulders above the surrounding forest? Well, I was to be sure and strike that. Beyond she indicated an isolated mountain with flanks as steep as the sides of a house, and distinguished by a top knot consisting of a grove of tall, feathery bamboos; well, that was the final pinnacle on which Raymond Hall was perched.

My sable Venus proved an admirable guide, and after overcoming obstacles as trying as those encountered by the hero of "Pilgrim's Progress," I arrived at that abode of hospitality, Raymond Hall.

In ascending the sugar loaf I reflected what an admirable site it would have offered for the punishment of Sisyphus. On reaching the summit I was confronted by the final mountain vis-à-vis, but alas! separated by a deep chasm clothed in a tangled mass of tropical vegetation; into this I plunged, striking out for the ceiba tree recommended to me as a sure sign-post. I reflected as I went on the truth of the Roman Poet's aphorism, "*Nihil sine magno vita labore dedit mortalibus*,"

“ Life has granted nothing to us mortals without hard work.”

I was cheered occasionally by the clatter of hoofs; this was caused by his Excellency's riding party, who rode down all the steepest declivities at full gallop, led by the Governor himself, who is a fearless horseman. Ultimately I was confronted by the last mountain to be scaled. As I struggled up by devious paths, I wished I had six legs like an insect, or the organization of a centipede would have been more advantageous still.

On reaching the bamboo grove on the summit I came upon our friend's villa, when a hearty welcome and the usual West Indian restoratives soon made me feel as good as ever.

There is a most extensive panoramic view from the front of the house, the same background of sapphire sea and harbour and plain as from Newcastle, but with quite a different fore-ground.

While on the subject of Jamaica mountain scenery I may mention one peculiarity which struck me, and that is the constant recurrence of deep caldron-shaped pits or basins, which often take the place of valleys in other mountain systems. This feature is so marked in a district on the way to Montego Bay that it is called the cockpit country, the entire surface, covering upwards of one hundred square miles, consisting of isolated cones surrounded and separated from each other by deep chasms and depressions to which the term abyss might be appropriately applied. I need scarcely add that these are all clothed in the densest of tropical vegetation. The district referred to is in the parish of Trelawney, from which the picturesque mounted volunteer corps came which formed the Prince's escort

on his way to open the Exhibition. I have described their serviceable, soldier-like appearance, and certainly such a rough training ground is well calculated to make good horsemen of them.

In returning to Craigton I passed some patches of cocoa shrubs covered with pods ; these are shaped like very elongated lemons, and on being opened proved to be full of beans, which when dried and ground and mixed with sugar and vanilla constitute the popular and nutritious article called chocolate. The cocoa shrub is low-sized and grows best under the shade of other and taller trees. When the pods are ripe the cultivators go through their grove with a pruning hook and lop them off ; they are then collected and placed in heaps to perspire. They are afterwards cut open, and the beans are dried in the sun. This process occupies from three to six days, according to weather. When dry they are placed in heaps and the natives dance amongst them with naked feet ; the object of this operation is to impart a handsome finish and an unctuous gloss and polish to the beans, which gives to European dealers an impression of oily richness—for my part I should prefer them in the rough. Fortunately for lovers of chocolate they are shelled before grinding, but it is bad news for consumers of shell cocoa, an article of diet specially recommended by the faculty to invalids as light and nutritious. I once tasted the resulting beverage, but now never more. In Italy it is sold by itinerant purveyors of cheap breakfasts at fairs and markets, under the name of “ Miserabile.” Cottagers who raise cocoa in quantities too small to dance amongst, meet the difficulty by rubbing the beans between their hands, the entire family, all ages and both

sexes, assisting; the coveted polish is thus imparted, the article rendered marketable, and the confidence of dealers secured.

Before we turn our backs upon the Newcastle district, I may narrate my experience there on the occasion of my former visit to Jamaica many years ago. I started from Kingston for the Blue Mountains without an idea of where I was to spend the night. I was told to present myself at any of the coffee estates I might casually find myself near at sundown, and I should be sure of a welcome. I tried the experiment and was not disappointed; the plantation I lighted on was not far from the military station of Newcastle. The owner came out to meet me in the most cordial manner, without even inquiring my name. I was straightway introduced to his family circle, and was made to feel as much at home as if I had been one of themselves. Next day he conducted me all over his estate, and explained the mysteries of growing and harvesting coffee. It is a very pretty crop; the shrubs or bushes are of no great height, and have deep green foliage. The flowers, which are small and of a very pure white colour, cover the bark like an eruption; they have a most delicate perfume. Flowers and fruit may be seen growing on the same bush.

The fruit resembles a laurel or yew berry, and contains two pips—the coffee of commerce, the flat sides being in close apposition; the most troublesome operation is to get rid of the surrounding pulp. The best coffee grows high up the mountain side. The limit is 4,000 feet. It will also thrive in the plains, where it grows luxuriantly, but the quality is coarse and inferior. The gathering of the fruit requires many hands, and

constitutes the farmer's difficulty. My host told me that he had endless trouble with his workmen, who were all Africans ; they were extremely independent and capricious. They would leave their work and go off wherever fancy took them, it was much if he could get them to attend three days in the week, and they were careless and unreliable to a degree. They also fought and quarrelled among themselves. He showed me a lad who had been shot in the breast by one of his comrades, the weapon being a rusty old fowling-piece ; the wound would have killed a white man, but the lad was endowed with a wonderful constitution and recovered with astonishing rapidity. On week days the men were scantily clothed, wearing only what mere decency required, the scarcely healed scar in the young negro's breast was consequently very conspicuous. The coffee when gathered is carried in baskets to a structure called a barbecue ; it resembles a shallow tank. My host's was of the largest size. The berries are here spread out thinly on the floor to be sun dried ; when this has been effected they are run through a mill to rub off the pulp, now shrivelled to a husk, the coffee grains are thus liberated ready for packing for export. The bags are conveyed down to Kingston on mule-back.

The product of this estate was of the best quality and fetched the highest price in the market, at that time 1s. per pound. It has, however, to be carefully sorted or it would lose its good name. I saw sundry piles of rejected berries. One very mangy-looking lot I was informed was tiger coffee and another rat coffee ; the latter consists of grains gnawed by rats. The history of the former is not fit for publication, but I may mention that the quadruped concerned is not the

monarch of the Indian jungle but a wild cat, which consumes the berries by way of vegetables as a dog eats blades of grass, or perhaps when poultry are scarce, and a vegetable diet thus rendered obligatory. The wild cat, then common enough, is now rare if not altogether extinct; perhaps the mongoose has starved it out.

I am under the impression that the refuse coffee described was the perquisite of the estate hands, and was carried away for home consumption.

The labour difficulty is much less now than it was then; the natives have greatly improved in disposition and temper, and have become much more industrious.

During my sojourn my most kind host took me to Saint Catherine's Peak, one of the Blue Mountain summits, but not the highest; it is upwards of 5,000 feet, and commands a splendid view, the north coasts of Jamaica being visible as well as the south—in fact a considerable portion of the island was spread out at our feet like a map. We were most fortunate in having an unusually clear atmosphere and no clouds. The mountains of Cuba, more than 100 miles away, were visible on the northern horizon, while to the east in the dim distance were the Haytian Mountains. The panorama that lay below us must have been that which suggested to Columbus the simile of the crumpled paper, all ridges and ravines.

Another expedition which we made was to the fern valleys, where occur tree ferns twenty, thirty and even forty feet high; they take the place of the palms, and are even more graceful, being crowned with a diadem of beautiful feathery fronds.

This luxuriant growth of ferns is due to constant

moisture, the clouds which so often conceal the mountain summits from view cling specially to those glens and cause an almost continuous drizzle. The section of a tree-fern stem presents on a large scale a pattern similar to that of ordinary bracken when cut across.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FAREWELL TO THE LAND OF SPRINGS.—THE MAROON COUNTRY.—BATH.—POINT MORANT.—PORT ANTONIO.—SCENERY OF NORTH COAST.—LOADING BANANAS AT RUNAWAY BAY.—LUCEA.—VOYAGE TO FLORIDA.

AFTER nearly two months' sojourn in Jamaica, the date at last arrived when, to our very great regret, we were compelled to commence our homeward voyage.

We decided to return *viâ* Florida and the United States, and we had no reason to repent our choice of route.

We took passage from Kingston by the *Juniata*, a well-appointed steamer belonging to the Plant Company, who own a system of railways connecting the Northern States with Florida, and having the town and port of Tampa for their terminus. Our course took us past Port Royal and along the Palisadoes, and from the deck we had a farewell view of the Exhibition building and grounds. Soon afterwards we were passing beneath the high mountain ranges that form the eastern extremity of the island.

These are clothed to the summit with forests difficult to penetrate ; the haunt of wild boars and formerly the home of the Maroons. I may explain that these wild tribes are descended from the runaway slaves who, previous to the emancipation, took refuge here, and cherished a savage resentment against their oppressors,

which culminated in the Maroon war. The resources of civilization proved too much for them, and their strongholds were destroyed and their villages broken up.

The dark mountain masses that frowned upon us from above constitute a gloomy region almost constantly smothered in cloud, caused by the condensation of the warm trade-wind coming in contact with the cold atmosphere that prevails amongst the summits and ridges 7,000 feet in altitude.

We passed a health resort distinguished by the name of Bath, which like its English namesake is good for rheumatism; and as the shades of night fell, the *Juniata* rounded Cape Morant. Near this is a harbour of the same name, from which bananas and other tropical products are shipped. Next morning we cast anchor on the north side of the island in Port Antonio.

This bay looks lovely as it is approached from the sea. Nothing can be more picturesque than the foreground of richly wooded hills in which it is embosomed, nothing grander than the background of majestic mountains rising steeply in a succession of ranges, each overtopping the last, until an altitude of 7,000 feet is attained. The land-locked basin so begirt nestles deeply amongst the hills, and is fringed with cocoa palms. Its chief breakwater consists of an island which almost bars the entrance. As we made our way past this natural bar we observed two steamers of considerable size, which our captain beheld with displeasure, for they were there to compete with us for the bananas which grew thickly in all the many glens, ravines and valleys that converge upon the port and are conveyed to market on the heads of the wives and daughters of the

lazy loons who smoke away their existence about the stores and grog shops of the town.

The *Juniata* was warped alongside a wooden pier, and proceeded to discharge a consignment of twenty-five Florida cattle which had been on board seven days, during which they refused to feed. I never saw such bags of bones—mere silhouettes of their species—airy shadows suggestive of anything but beef. They staggered out of the hold, tumbled over the cables that moored us to the shore, and vanished into the warehouse opposite. Then began the loading of bananas—counted in bunch by bunch monotonously until 1,000 was reached. The captain would have welcomed ten times that amount, but the two steamers already referred to had been beforehand with him and had swept the market.

I strolled through the town—a collection of wooden houses, squalid and dirty and utterly unworthy of its splendid surroundings. Nevertheless, in neglected corners Nature strove to compensate for the surrounding filth by a display of flowers of gorgeous hue, crimson *Justicias* and *Hibiscus*, which glowed with a brilliancy which would have aroused the envy of any English gardener.

The banana business over, we cast off and resumed our voyage along the north side of the island.

After leaving Port Antonio we had an interesting cruise, closely hugging the coast. Sugar estates, palm-groves, romantic bays embosomed in the most luxuriant tropical vegetation, savannas green as emeralds and supporting many cattle, passed before our eyes like a moving panorama, all backed by stately mountain ranges of ever-varying contour and most

picturesquely broken outline. We recognized an old friend in Ocho Rios, and further on had a splendid view of the Falls of Roaring River.

St. Ann's looked prettier than ever from the water, and we cast anchor there within three hundred yards of the shore. Soon a whole fleet of boats laden with bananas came across, cleverly steered by their dusky crews, and took up their position right and left of the *Juniata*, which threw open her iron sides to engulf the profitable cargo. Profitable it is, for the current price to growers is one shilling per bunch, to be sold again to the miners of Colorado and the populations of the great Northern cities at the rate of from ten to twelve shillings per bunch, *i.e.*, upwards of 1000 per cent. advance.

From St. Ann's we proceeded along the coast to Runaway Bay, which we reached after sunset; the black pilot came off in a rickety dug-out canoe, manned by a highly picturesque crew, rendered still more so by the flickering light of a torch, in which their swarth features looked as if cast in bronze. The natives on shore now lighted a great bonfire and prepared to make a night of it, for 5000 bunches awaited us here, which it would take hours to ship; boat-load after boat-load was ferried to us along the ruddy track thrown across the bay by the blazing beacon.

Meantime the drums on shore struck up, a lively dance commenced which went on most of the night, but in the intervals we could hear the monotonous counting of bunches by the tallymen, carried on in a kind of chant. Some of the more enterprising male passengers landed and joined the festivities, and declared that they had had immense fun.

The next morning we cast anchor in Montego Bay.

I landed at what appeared to me a secluded spot on the shore, bent on a swim. There was a delightful smooth shelving strand and a thick grove of palms coming down almost to the water's edge; under one of these I left my garments and proceeded to take my pastime in the rippling waters, diving, and plunging, and swimming as far as seemed safe from sharks. I was just proceeding to rejoin my clothes when there appeared from behind a tree a white lady attired in black. I hastily submerged myself, going down after the manner of a submarine boat. She marched past with stately step and severe expression. I felt certain she would not look back, so ventured to rise from the waves and continue my advance towards the clothes, when suddenly there appeared from behind the same tree a black lady in white, with a basket on her head. In the agitation of the moment I did not stop to observe its contents, but once more took refuge beneath the crystal element, leaving only my head visible. The lady was in no way disconcerted but smiled placidly, dropped a curtsy, and said "Good mornin', Mas'r." I adjured her to go away, which she seemed in no hurry to do. After these alarming incidents I made a rush for my clothes, and got inside them with the least possible delay. I then ascertained from my boatman that immediately behind the palm screen was a kind of hospital village, of which the white lady in black was the superioress. The black lady in white, on the other hand, was on her way to market.

Montego town is regularly and well laid out, with broad streets of houses and gardens, the latter brilliant with flowers. There is a nice, old-fashioned parish church built upon a platform of rock. The pews are



LUCEA JAMIACA.

constructed of some very hard wood resembling teak, and its walls are covered with many tablets recording the virtues of departed Jamaicans, some of them dating one hundred years back, in the good old time when planter and millionaire were synonymous. We lunched at Paine's Hotel, which stands on a hill and commands a splendid view of the bay, dotted with islands and begirt with lofty mountains, presenting a panorama not easily forgotten. We left Montego with regret, and had I known there was so good a hotel there, I should have arranged to stay a week, as the region around looked well worth exploring.

Two or three hours' more coasting brought us to Lucea, another vision of fairy-like beauty. The harbour is entirely land-locked and protected from every wind that blows; it is surrounded by hills most picturesquely broken, and clad in the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. We landed and explored the town while the *Juniata* was taking a couple of thousand more bunches of bananas, and it was with regret that we heard the command given to weigh anchor, for we had been fairly bewitched with the charms of Lucea. It had been a case of love at first sight, but alas, the oft-repeated sequel followed, and we were jilted by the capricious beauty. It fell out in this wise. In the middle of the port there was a buoy anchored as moorings for ships. Our pilot ought at least to have been well acquainted with this, nevertheless he allowed us to back straight on to it.

"Where's that buoy?" suddenly exclaimed the captain, looking around. Just at that moment an ominous grinding sound was heard, followed by a loud crash—"Right here," responded the pilot, thus reminded.

Our captain uttered an emphatic monosyllable and shouted "Full speed ahead," but the propeller would not stir.

A boat was lowered, and a Yankee sailor announced *de profundis* that he guessed the buoy was "chawed up." A coloured lad now offered to dive down and see what had happened, but he only hung on to the stern of the boat and felt about with his feet.

"Why don't he dive properly?" said one passenger.

"The sharks might be looking," explained another.

It was ultimately discovered that the chain cable of the buoy was around the propeller, and it took six hours to cut it clear, and we steamed away from lovely Lucea at midnight with mixed feelings.

Next day at noon we sighted the Cayman Islands, and on Sunday we passed in succession the Isle of Pines and the extreme west point of Cuba—a low mangrove-covered shore on which a heavy surf was breaking. On the fourth day we entered Tampa, the Liverpool of Florida.

APPENDIX.

THE JAMAICA EXHIBITION AND VISIT OF H.R.H. PRINCE GEORGE OF WALES,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
THE OPENING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND
THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

CHAPTER I.

THE LANDING AND RECEPTION OF H.R.H. PRINCE GEORGE OF WALES.

ALTHOUGH her Colonies constitute the glory and pride of the British Empire, yet a considerable proportion of English readers do not take so keen an interest in their doings as might have been expected. For the convenience, therefore, of this section I have thought it well to annex, in the form of an Appendix, the details of the opening of the Jamaica Exhibition.

I am indebted to an ably conducted Kingston journal—"The Daily Gleaner"—for the lists of names of the personages who took part in the several functions and incidents referred to, as also for the descriptions of the Town Hall decorations, and some other matters.

January 27th, 1891.

The day, destined to be memorable in the annals of Jamaica, dawned at last bright, clear and cold, and we at King's House were early afoot and looking up our uniforms and Court dresses wherein suitably to meet and welcome H.R.H. Prince George of Wales. The warship *Thrush*, which has the honour of being commanded by him, had come in the previous day from Port Royal, and taken up her allotted position in the harbour opposite Kingston.

At 8.30 A.M. we were told off to our respective

carriages, and started for the scene of action. The particular equipage in which I travelled contained besides the Earl of Rosse, who wore over his uniform the blue ribbon of St. Patrick, while the handsome star of that order glittered upon his breast, the Hon. Guthrie Browne, who wore the uniform of a Deputy-Lieutenant, and Lord George Fitzgerald, attired in Court dress. I wore my Deputy-Lieutenant's uniform. Altogether we were a very effective group, and so thought the native population, as will presently be seen.

In the second carriage sat his Excellency the Governor, wearing over his handsome official uniform the star and ribbon of St. Michael and St. George. He was accompanied by his A.-de-C., Captain Kavanagh. We were quickly whirling along the dusty road, and as soon as we emerged from the lodge gates, we found ourselves in the presence of an enthusiastic crowd, which became denser and more demonstrative as we advanced. Frantic cheers rent the air, the men shouted, the women waved their handkerchiefs, the children were hoisted on the shoulders of their elders to get a view of the glittering cavalcade.

At a place called Half-way Tree we were met by a mounted escort consisting of the Trelawney Volunteers, a most soldier-like, serviceable-looking corps, a perfect model for irregular cavalry. They wore grey felt sombrero hats with broad flapping rim, scarlet jackets, and grey trousers; each man carried in his hand his carbine upright and ready for action. They formed the advance and rear-guard of the vice-regal *cortège*, much resembling Australian bush-rangers in their picturesque costume and devil-may-care bearing.

The road from this point to Kingston presented a

very brilliant appearance ; it was spanned by arches and flags, and loyal mottoes of welcome. The road was lined right and left by the coloured population of Jamaica in their smartest attire—a most picturesque crowd. The gardens and villas behind them were also overflowing with gaily dressed ladies and children, and their household visitors from the country. Every verandah and balcony along the line of procession was thronged with spectators, all in their lightest and gayest costumes. The thoroughfares were lined by the black soldiers of the West India Regiment, dressed in their picturesque Zouave uniforms ; and certainly nothing could have become those black troops better. This regiment alone, however, would not have sufficed, and they were supplemented by the artillery and rifle companies of the Kingston Volunteer Militia, also by 500 of the constabulary. Between these we drove down to the landing-place, a handsome covered wharf gaily decorated with bunting for the occasion.

On our side were drawn up a strong detachment of the West India Regiment and their band ; opposite them a squadron or two of the Trelawney Mounted Rifles. Behind them was a carved stone pedestal which had once supported a statue of Rodney, removed I know not why.

The wharf itself was crowded with officials in uniforms and Court dresses, also with naval and military officers, conspicuous amongst the latter being Major-General the Hon. Clive Justice, accompanied by a staff of colonels and majors. Here also was the Chief of the Kingston Volunteer Militia, and the Inspector-General of Police. Another group consisted of the legal luminaries of the island, the Chief Justice

and various lesser Justices, and the Attorney-General, who all wore Windsor uniforms. The medical profession was represented by a distinguished Surgeon-General of the army, K.C.B., and decorated with the Ashantee medal; the members of the Legislative Council of Jamaica were also in attendance, and with these the Mayor of Kingston, Dr. Ogilvie, in the uniform of Surgeon-Major of the Kingston Volunteers. There were also some officers of the Canadian Volunteer Corps, wearing the dark blue uniforms of the Dufferin Rifles. Interspersed in the brilliant throng were many naval uniforms. The *coup d'œil* over the harbour was striking in the extreme; the Russian, Spanish, and English ironclads were drawn up in a great semicircle opposite, and from the centre of this and occupying the position of an arrow fitted to a bow, was an avenue of man-of-war boats along which H.R.H. advanced in his steam pinnace, each pair of boats as he passed between them saluting by erecting their oars in a vertical position like a grove of pine trees. Meanwhile the yards were manned and the salutes from the ships thundered as the Queen's grandson descended the companion-way of his ship and took his place in the launch which was to convey him to shore. At this moment the boat drew alongside, and the Prince stepped ashore, immediately saluting the Admiral. He then spoke to his Excellency the Governor. The band of the 1st Battalion West India Regiment struck up "God save the Queen," and forming in procession the party on the wharf, headed by Prince George and the Governor, walked round the space enclosed by the guard of honour to the spot where the carriages were waiting.

His Excellency and Prince George, followed by the distinguished personages in attendance, drove off amid the deafening cheers and huzzas of the populace.

All along Harbour Street his Royal Highness was greeted with acclamations from thousands of loyal throats, and the whole brilliant scene—the decorations, the crowds, the colours, the cheers, combined to render the pageant one not easily to be forgotten. A shower of flowers came from the Victoria House, and as the carriage stopped at the Town Hall, another great cheer was sent up, and the band of H.M.S. *Bellerophon* played the National Anthem. On alighting the Prince waited for the Admiral, on whose arrival the whole party proceeded through the Hall, to the platform.

The chamber had been beautified for the occasion by the city authorities. Round the building and along the entablature of the columns, hung festoons of tri-colour cloth—red, white, and blue, and on each pillar was a shield with trophies of flags of different nations. The platform was covered with rich carpets, and in the centre was a marble-top table, on which reposed a golden casket containing the address. On either side were couches and chairs. Behind on the wall, daintily draped, was the old and valuable painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, of “Vice-Admiral Rodney,” and above was the motto, “God save the Queen.” In the centre of the Hall was a scroll inscribed “Welcome Prince George.” The platform was profusely set out with tropical plants of many varieties, while the staircase to the street was draped in crimson cloth, relieved by various graceful palms which Jamaica was so well qualified to supply.

The party arranged themselves on the platform, the

Governor in the centre, Prince George on his right, flanked by Major-General Justice. We, guests of his Excellency, were conducted to places on the Governor's left hand, along with the Admiral and the Commodore of the fleet.

I should not have reproduced the address now presented to H.R.H. were it not that it is instructive and gives an interesting insight into the views and feelings of the educated classes of Jamaica. It also contains well deserved complimentary references to the successful exertions of the present Governor to promote the advancement of the colony which has been entrusted to his care.

It paves the way too for the Prince's reply, in which, speaking from an acquaintance with Jamaica dating back some years, he is in a position to confirm the statements of the Mayor and burgesses as to the material progress made.

His Worship the Mayor having unrolled the address, read as follows :—

“TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE GEORGE OF
WALES, &c.

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS—We, the Custos, Magistrates, Mayor, and Council of the city and parish of Kingston, and other inhabitants, beg leave, with profound respect, to tender to your Royal Highness a most cordial and loyal welcome to our island home. We recall with liveliest satisfaction the visit of your Royal Highness nearly eleven years ago, and it is with heartfelt gratitude, shared in by the whole community, that we hail your Royal Highness' return, for the purpose of rendering to the colony what we cannot

but regard as a gracious act on your part. Since the former visit of your Royal Highness, the loyalty of the colony has been conspicuously shewn on the occasion of the completion of the fiftieth year of her Majesty's glorious and beneficent reign. We are well assured that in no part of her great Empire does her Majesty more truly reign in the hearts of her subjects than she does in this island.

"We welcome your Royal Highness very specially as representing the close relations to, and interest ever taken in, her Majesty's Navy by the Royal family, and we call to mind the fact that it was in these waters that some of the most glorious achievements were won by that navy—achievements which contributed to the extension of the Empire, added to its renown, and stirred the hearts of all the people. We believe that during your brief sojourn among us at this time, your Royal Highness will observe with pleasure many signs of agricultural, commercial, political, and educational progress since your former visit.

"Our present Governor, Sir Henry Blake, has made the subject of progress his own, and has placed himself at the head of a movement which will, we are sure, not terminate with the close of the Exhibition of Industry and Art which is about to be held, but will leave lasting and beneficial results to the island. The people, as one man, own their obligations to his Excellency, and desire to express their gratitude to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales for his distinguished patronage, and to yourself as representing him on this occasion. It has inspired the people with new hopes of worthily filling their place as a part of the Greater Britain we are all proud of, and we are persuaded that

it will be followed by such development in industry, in education, and in all that constitutes national progress as will bring credit to all who have had a share in it.

“Renewing the expression of our profound respect for your Royal Highness and for every member of the Royal family, gratefully acknowledging the honour and the kindness shewn to us on this occasion, and trusting that your visit may afford your Royal Highness pleasure, we bid your Royal Highness a united and hearty welcome.”

His Royal Highness then read his reply as follows :—

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—I beg to return my sincere thanks for the kindly welcome you have given to me on the occasion of my once more coming among you. This is not the only time since my first visit to your ancient colony eleven years ago that I have been the recipient of your hospitality. It has been a great pleasure to me to observe the increase of prosperity among you, and a source of gratification that the object of my present visit is to open an Exhibition which is an evidence of the progress of Jamaica. I join with you most heartily in congratulating his Excellency Sir Henry Blake on the magnificent success which has attended his efforts, and the universal support he has received from you, gentlemen, and the people of this island. I thank you for the expression of loyalty and affection towards her gracious Majesty the Queen and the members of my family. I shall take an early opportunity of informing her Majesty of the extremely cordial manner in which you have received me, and for which once more I beg you to accept my thanks.”

This function over, we left the Town Hall in the same order as before, and a royal progress through the metropolis of Jamaica commenced. The loyalty of the teeming masses, which had been bubbling and seething all the morning, now fairly boiled over, and when they caught sight of the manly, handsome, smiling features of the young Prince, the cheers became deafening, while as for the softer sex they seemed ready to spring out of their smart dresses in order to give adequate expression to their feelings.

The waving of handkerchiefs, the wafting of kisses seemed but a poor vent; one lady was heard to say, "I would like to hold his hand and kiss it," and no doubt those who thought the same were legion.

The coloured women called H.R.H. "Queen Grand-mamma's son."

Amongst the devices were many Prince of Wales's feathers in compliment to the Prince's father, who is patron of the Exhibition, and has taken a keen interest throughout in its progress and success.

I never saw a more enthusiastic and demonstrative population. The footways were so packed as to be almost impassable; and such red-hot loyalty! If all the colonies of Great Britain were as devoted to their sovereign and the mother country as the Jamaicans appear to be, the position of the empire would be unassailable, and our Colonial Confederation be fixed upon a foundation of adamant. Every kind of loyal sentiment waved overhead on scrolls, and flags and banners:—"Long live the Lady of Jamaica" (one of the Queen's titles of which Jamaicans are not a little proud); "Welcome to our Sailor Prince;" "We hail

thy visit ;" " God bless the Prince of Wales ;" " God bless our Sovereign's grandson," &c., &c.

One sentiment, " The Shades of Rodney welcome thee," sounded rather sombre. There arose in one's mind visions of the statue in Don Juan which so unpleasantly interrupted that naughty scamp's little supper-party.

The cheering and enthusiasm continued all through the town, from the footways below and from the thronged verandahs and balconies overhead ; and indeed it was prolonged from villas, and hamlets, and along the highway right and left, until we reached the entrance gates of King's House.

Arrived here, after a brief rest the Governor's guests were presented one by one to H.R.H., after which we adjourned to the Banqueting Hall for a much-needed meal. This ended, we set out, accompanied by the ladies of the party, for the Exhibition, escorted as before, H.R.H. being cheered with not less enthusiasm than during his first progress.

CHAPTER II.

INAUGURATION OF THE EXHIBITION BY H.R.H. PRINCE GEORGE OF WALES.

ON entering the Exhibition building, the Prince, accompanied by his Excellency and Lady Blake, were conducted to a dais erected in the north transept facing the entrance. Here stood three chairs of state, behind which were ranged the King's House party and the principal official personages of the colony.

The spectacle presented at this moment was very brilliant, the interior of the building being decorated with a profusion of tropical flowers and foliage arranged in festoons from column to column; transepts and galleries were thronged with gaily dressed ladies, who seemed to compete with the floral ornaments in richness of colouring.

At this moment there was a pause, a photographic camera had been arranged opposite the dais, and by this means the scene was to be stereotyped.

Conscious that we were about to be portrayed, every beau and every belle struck their most graceful attitude, and put on their most charming smiles; I observed, however, an ominous fumbling and fuss about the camera. The operator stood with his hand on the cap, but I did not see him remove it, and it afterwards turned out that he and the Exhibition authorities had quarrelled, the latter refused the artist's ultimatum, and

the hoped-for historic photograph never became an accomplished fact.

L. F. McKinnon, Esq., Secretary of the Commissioners, then stepped forward, and read the address to his Royal Highness as follows:—

“TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE GEORGE OF
WALES.

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS—We, the Commissioners of the Jamaica Exhibition of 1891, beg to offer to your Royal Highness our most cordial thanks for the honour that you have done our island and the undertaking in which we are interested by graciously consenting to be present and to open this Exhibition. We gladly avail ourselves of this opportunity of once again welcoming your Royal Highness to this ancient colony, your visits to which on former occasions are still remembered with the greatest pleasure by the people of Jamaica, who yield to none in the sentiments of loyalty and devotion which they cherish towards the person and throne of her Gracious Majesty the Queen.

“We desire most humbly to express our profound sense of gratitude to her Majesty the Queen for the interest which her Majesty has been graciously pleased to express in our undertaking, and for sanctioning the loan of pictures from the Royal collection. We would also tender, and beg that your Royal Highness will convey to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales our most respectful thanks for the signal honour which he had done us by acceding to the request of our President and becoming the patron of this Exhibition.

“ The original suggestion from which this Exhibition took its rise was, by collecting and displaying samples of the agricultural and industrial products of the island, to arouse and foster a spirit of enterprise and emulation among the inhabitants of Jamaica, and at the same time to disseminate among the people of other countries a more extensive knowledge of the resources and capabilities of the colony.

“ The spontaneous and liberal manner in which funds for carrying out the enterprise were guaranteed by the people of the colony and those interested in its welfare, and the ready response with which the invitation to take part in the Exhibition was met by the mother country, by the sister colonies—notably by Canada—and by many foreign states, led to the enlargement of the original scheme, and has resulted in an Exhibition on a larger scale, and of a more general and comprehensive character, than that at first contemplated by its originators.

“ Every effort has been made to render the Jamaica Exhibition a complete and representative collection of the agricultural, mineral, and industrial products of the island, and we would venture respectfully to express a hope, that, as such, they will be found by your Royal Highness to possess features of novelty and interest.

“ We avail ourselves of this opportunity gratefully to acknowledge the ready and generous support in the shape of exhibits which the Commissioners have received from other countries. The varied and instructive exhibits displayed by foreign contributors cannot fail to possess for the people of this colony a special interest as being the first collection of the kind which

they have had an opportunity of inspecting, and will, we feel confident, prove highly instructive and conduce to material advance and improvement in the handicrafts and industries of the island.

“In conclusion we would venture to express the hope that in opening this, the latest of the long series of Exhibitions which have taken their origin from the Great Exhibition of 1851 with which the memory of the lamented Prince Consort must ever be associated, your Royal Highness may be introducing an era of renewed and increased prosperity for an island whose special pride it is that our beloved Queen should bear among her titles that of Supreme Lady of Jamaica.”

His Royal Highness Prince George said :

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—I thank you most cordially for the manner in which you have welcomed me amongst you to-day, and can assure you that I am profoundly touched by the loyal feelings you have expressed towards her Majesty the Queen, and the kindly interest you have shewn towards myself. I am extremely gratified that I am enabled to have the honour to represent my father on such an occasion as this, and I know that it gave him the greatest pleasure to accede to the request of the President to become the patron of this Exhibition. This magnificent building, the wide and varied character of the exhibits, not only those of the island but of all parts of the world, testify in the most unmistakeable manner the energy and forethought displayed by his Excellency the President, and by you, gentlemen, the people of this colony. I am well assured that such qualities will not have been applied in vain,

and the result will be to increase the prosperity and result in good to Jamaica. It will be my pleasing duty to acquaint my father of the great success that has attended the undertaking, and I know from the deep interest he has taken in its progress, that its successful inauguration will be most gratifying to him. I shall take the earliest opportunity of informing the Queen of the loyal welcome I have received from those people whose pride it is that she holds the title of 'Supreme Lady of Jamaica.' "

The address concluded, the Bishop of Jamaica read a prayer and pronounced a blessing, after which His Excellency Sir Henry Blake, turning to his Royal Highness, presented him with a golden key, and said :

"YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS—I have just received a telegram from her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, conveying most cordial hopes for the success of the Exhibition. In asking that your Royal Highness may be pleased to declare the Exhibition open, I earnestly pray that the golden key which I now present to your Royal Highness may be a fitting emblem of a golden future for Jamaica."

His Royal Highness then took the key, and declared the Exhibition open.

The next ceremony was a royal progress through the building and grounds.

The Prince, with Lady Blake on his arm, led the way, followed by his Excellency, the Governor and the guests from Government House, comprising the

following :—The Lady Eva Fitzgerald, The Lady Hester Carew, The Earl of Rosse, K.P., The Hon. Guthrie Browne, Mr. Villiers Stuart, D.L. of Dromana, co. Waterford, and Mrs. Villiers Stuart, Miss Ramsay Smith, Lord George Fitzgerald, A.D.C., Captain C. McMorrough Kavanagh, 10th Hussars, A.D.C. Then followed the English Admiral, the foreign Admirals, the Chief Justice of Jamaica, the Bishop, the Commander-in-Chief and other colonial notabilities.

We passed along from court to court, the temperature the while steadily going up until 85° was reached. At this crisis we arrived at a stately trophy of champagne bottles labelled with the most noted vintages from Epernay and Rheims. Here a beneficent Frenchman advanced, followed by his myrmidons bearing a tray of glasses sparkling and bubbling over with the driest and best brands, which were distributed amongst us very opportunely, and just in time to restore our flagging energies.

Every court and all the galleries having been most conscientiously viewed and examined we adjourned to the gardens. Amongst the curiosities there to be seen beneath the palm-trees were a group of genuine Carib Indians engaged in basket-making. This was the interesting group of aborigines whom I have already mentioned as our fellow-passengers on board the *Medway*.

Our interview with them concluded, we visited in succession all the annexes in the grounds, machinery in motion, working dairy, industrial village, Canadian annexe, fine-art gallery, &c., &c., and were not sorry to get back to King's House. The demand upon our energies was, however, by no means ended, for in the

evening there was a banquet, and after that we returned to the Exhibition to witness the fireworks; but the most effective spectacle was the illumination of the fleet as seen from the balconies of the Exhibition building; a conspicuous feature in this display being the Russian ironclad *Minnie*, the masts, spars, and hull of which were picked out in fire by means of thousands of little electric lights. As seen in the distance she had the aspect of a demon apparition, the ghost of some departed cruiser revisiting the scenes of her piratical exploits.

It is greatly to be regretted that the London press took so little notice of the Jamaica Exhibition and its opening. When the mails came out which the islanders expected would have brought them accounts of what the mother country thought of their proceedings, they found no reference to it in any of the London daily papers, although as if in mockery they published a long telegram about a drunken fracas at Port Royal, dated the very day of the opening!

After all their exertions and sacrifices and anxious anticipations of commendation from home, this was a cruel disappointment to the Jamaicans, and the neglect was as impolitic as it was cruel, for it was calculated to chill that colonial loyalty which England ought to cherish and prize. To snub friends while making concessions to foes is not the way to strengthen the foundations of the Empire.

CHAPTER III.

THE OPENING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.—THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS.—BRILLIANT BANQUET.

THE idea which many people at home have about a colonial Governor in the West Indies is that he has nothing to do all day but to smoke cigarettes, and sip sangaree with plenty of ice in it, and that the severest duty to which he is liable is an occasional state dinner, or a dignity ball. I am enabled to affirm from personal observation that the reality is very different. At all events few men are harder worked than the Governor of Jamaica. He is always down first in the morning, begins the day by doing duty as chaplain, reading the lesson and prayers for the household—and I wish all rectors and curates read as well.

After breakfast he has a voluminous correspondence to attend to; then he has to accord interviews to various people, who wish to see him on a variety of matters connected with the progress and prosperity of the colony. Then he has to drive four miles into Kingston and attend the Legislative Council, direct their deliberations and do duty as President and Speaker. This goes on daily for hours during the session.

On his return home it constantly happens that he has social duties to fulfil contingent upon his official position. Added to this he has had for the last few

months a very anxious time in connection with the Exhibition. It appeared to me that those who were responsible for its management and ought to have taken all the trouble upon themselves had recourse to his Excellency on the most trivial subjects ; if an electric lamp went out, or a lady of the variety corps wore too short skirts, or an exhibit was stolen or broken, or the refreshments at the Exhibition dining-rooms were defective, they seemed to think it the Governor's duty to deal with the difficulty.

I had the privilege of accompanying his Excellency to the opening of the Legislative Council. This ceremony was attended with much pomp and circumstance. The visitors were required to attend in uniform or Court dress, whilst the Governor himself wore his official robes. The building in which the Legislative Council meet has not much to boast of from an architectural point of view. The chamber in which the deliberations of the Council take place is furnished with a long table down the centre, lined with seats right and left. At one end there is a raised dais on which is a chair of state, occupying a similar position to that of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The cortège consisted of his Excellency, with his aide-de-camp, secretary, etc., and sundry visitors. We entered the town with a military escort, and drove up to the House of Assembly amid the clatter of sabres and the cheers of the populace. The Governor was received at the entrance by some of the members, and conducted to the chair of state, the visitors taking their places at his right and left. The members of the Council sat at the table. His Excellency then delivered an address, which appeared to me so interesting and

instructive, and to give in a compact form so much information as to the condition and future prospects of Jamaica, that I have thought myself justified in reproducing it *in extenso*.

“HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL :

“I am glad to be able to open this session of the Legislative Council with an assurance of the satisfactory condition of the island.

“During the months that have elapsed since our last meeting I have again visited several parishes, and everywhere I have found evidences of awakened energy, of hopeful effort in the present, and of confidence in the future. The island shews signs of a rapid recovery from the depression of the period immediately preceding the year 1889. There is a large increase in the value of real property; the fruit trade is expanding with extraordinary rapidity, and with the daily improving means of communication will still further expand.

“The acreage under sugar-canes has decreased, but the decrease is more than counterbalanced by the increased acreage devoted to the cultivation of bananas, coffee, cocoa, tobacco and ground provisions.

“The improvement in the dwellings of the people is a fair test of their prosperity, and I find that the number of houses paying rates at an assessed value, increased during the year ending 30th September, 1890, by 24 per cent.

“The general tax and licence receipts returned an increase of 15·3 per cent., while the Customs Revenue shews an increase of 17·7 per cent., and the Collector General bears witness to the willingness and cheerful-

ness with which public obligations have been discharged.

“ During the past year the following bridges in the eastern parishes have been completed :—

“ Dry River.

“ Spanish River.

“ Buff Bay River.

“ Priestman's River.

“ White River.

“ Pencar River.

“ Devil's River.

“ Harbour Head River.

“ Roches Gully, and the bridges over the Swift River and the Rio Grande, are being pushed forward as rapidly as possible.

“ The selection has been made of the roads to be taken over by the Directors of Public Works under the Parochial Roads Law of 1890, and as the selected roads are being transferred to the Public Works Department as quickly as circumstances will permit, I hope that the end of the present year will see over 960 miles added to the 800 miles already included in the main road system.

“ The first section of twelve and a-half miles of railway extension has been made and opened for traffic, and telegraph extensions have been carried out from Half-way Tree to Annotto Bay, from Brown's Town through Barnstaple to Ulster Spring, from Shooter's Hill to Balaclava, and from Santa Cruz to Malvern; while to facilitate the timely signalling of vessels telephonic communication has been established between Morant Point lighthouse and Plantain Garden River telegraph stations.

“ Five companies have taken advantage of the Jamaica

Hotels Law of the last session, and under the Government guarantee suitable hotels have been erected at Myrtle Bank, Heywood Street, Constant Spring, Spanish Town and Moneague, so that for the first time in the history of Jamaica, sufficient hotel accommodation is available for tourist visitors to the island. I am glad to say that in the creation of these hotels the less wealthy travellers have not been forgotten, as one of the hotels in Kingston affords excellent accommodation at a tariff within the means of every well-to-do peasant.

“ In addition to these improved means of internal communication and transport I have decided, with the advice of my Privy Council, to accept a proposal received from the Imperial Government to reduce the rates of postage between this island and the United Kingdom from fourpence to twopence half-penny per half ounce, a reduction that must facilitate the operations of commerce, and thus assist in the development of our resources.

“ The loss of the Post Office Revenue from the reduction of the inland postage on letters from twopence to one penny per half ounce, and on post-cards from one penny to one half-penny, which came into operation on the first January, 1890, has been in the first year but £2,765, instead of the estimated £5,000, a gratifying result that shews how readily the people of the colony respond to increased facilities of communication.

“ The system of Postal Orders for small sums, inaugurated in the month of April last, has been found to work satisfactorily, and the public are now availing themselves freely of the great convenience afforded by these orders for the purpose of remittance.

“ My visits to the parishes during the past year were

undertaken for the purpose of performing the pleasant duty of opening the local Exhibitions arranged as preliminaries to the Exhibition of which I shall speak presently. They were held at Falmouth, Montego Bay, May Pen, Porus, Port Maria, Port Antonio, Spanish Town, and St. Ann's Bay.

"These local Exhibitions were visited by many thousands, whose intelligent interest in the exhibits gave every reason to anticipate the attendance of the great mass of the population at the International Exhibition for which these local efforts were a preparation.

"That Exhibition was opened by his Royal Highness Prince George of Wales on the 27th of January, on the day and at the hour decided upon in October, 1889.

"His Royal Highness was deeply impressed by the beauty, the extent and the value of the Exhibition, and equally so by the loyal enthusiasm with which he was greeted in the splendid reception given to the grandson of the Queen by the people of Jamaica.

"On the day of the opening I received a telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, conveying his cordial good wishes for the success of the Exhibition, and two days afterwards I received a telegram assuring me of her Majesty's gratification at the successful opening of the Exhibition and the enthusiastic welcome to Prince George of Wales.

"It would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of the Exhibition to Jamaica. Carried out as this great work has been by the hearty co-operation of every class of the community, it has demonstrated how much can be done when all work together for the common good; it has stimulated intellectual activity

among the people, and has brought Jamaica with her possibilities and attractions before the world with a prominence unequalled during the present century. The consequence is to be seen in the keen competition for her trade, and there are already indications that the close of the Exhibition will find the island endowed with more than one valuable industry, hitherto undeveloped, while markets will be found for products till now neglected. Nor will the benefit be confined to Jamaica, for the products of the Bahamas, Barbadoes, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Turks Islands, are exhibited in their respective courts and are being noted by observant eyes. The number registered as having visited the Exhibition up to the present is 78,308, and I have no doubt that before its close a very large proportion of the people of Jamaica will have availed themselves of the opportunity of improvement and advancement afforded by it.

“Two subjects have occupied my earnest attention—the introduction of new products, and the adoption of some practical means of industrial training.

“During the year I have directed the Botanical Department to procure a sufficient number of the Sisal Hemp or ‘Pita’ plant to enable the Department to establish an experimental farm at Hope from which plants may be distributed, and the cultivation extended. The growth of this valuable fibre plant in the Bahamas, where it was first systematically cultivated at my suggestion in 1886, has, under the fostering care of the present Governor, attained such proportions that the value of land in that colony has more than doubled, and its material prosperity is proportionately enhanced.

“I have also directed that experiments be made at

Hope Gardens in the growth of onions from seed imported direct from the Canaries on the system adopted in Bermuda. So far both Pita plants and onions are doing well at Hope. Should the latter succeed, the onion will be a most valuable addition to the crops of the small cultivators, as there is a profitable market in the United States and Canada for all that Jamaica can produce.

“ The question of Industrial Training for the young people of the colony is of primary importance. While I yield to no man in my appreciation of the benefits of education, I am by no means satisfied that a literary education to the exclusion of industrial training is an unmixed blessing to the inhabitants of this island. I have granted a licence to the Girls' Industrial School at Alpha Cottage. The Industrial School at Hope has been built, and is now occupied by twenty boys. The work of building the Industrial Girls' School in connection with the Government Training College for Female Teachers at Shortwood will be undertaken without delay, and I hope that during the present year that school will also be in operation. I am sensible how little can be accomplished by these three schools to supply the want of technical training, and I am conscious that the industrial school system, as at present established, will not reach the children of respectable cultivators who form the class to whom technical education is of especial importance. I shall ask you to place at my disposal a sum sufficient to enable me to try the experiment of sending competent instructors to certain districts, whose teaching may so improve the cultivation and preparation of certain of our products as to largely increase the value of our exports.

“In consequence of the resolution passed on the 24th April last that the Cadastral Survey Fund Law of 1889 should be repealed, I recommend to her Majesty's Secretary of State that her Majesty should be advised to disallow the law. The disallowance by her Majesty was notified by despatch from her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 29th September, 1890. A sum of £4,298 had in the meantime been collected under the provisions of the law, which sum I proposed to return to those who paid it. But as I am advised that money legally collected for a given purpose cannot be paid out of the Treasury for any other purpose than that for which it was collected, a Bill will be laid before you to authorise the refund of this money by reducing the quit rent for the coming year from one penny to one half-penny per acre. The quit rent is payable by the same persons who contributed this sum, and as the annual amount produced by the tax is about £8,000, this will practically effect the desired purpose.

“It has been found in practice that the provisions of the Parochial Road Law, 1890, press hardly upon the smaller cultivators. A Bill will be submitted to you, dealing with the subject.

“Owing to the change in the commencement of the financial year of the 1st April, it is not possible to give accurately the results of the year's financial operations. Great care has been taken to arrive at an approximate result, but it is possible that when the books come to be closed it may be found that the estimate is incorrect.

“The year began with a surplus of £190,287, to which must be added the amount of the general revenue for

the current year, £619,676, making a total of £809,963. The approximate expenditure will be £567,812, leaving a surplus of £242,151. But in this surplus is included £100,000 paid on account of the railway, which can hardly be said to be properly applicable for ordinary expenditure, as the cost of the lands on which the extensions are to be built must be paid from this sum. This will probably ultimately absorb one half of the amount. The apparent surplus will thus be reduced to £192,151, from which, to allow for miscalculations, I deduct £20,000, leaving £172,151 to be added to the revenue of 1891-92, which is estimated at £531,490. This makes the total sum available for the expenditure of 1891-92, £703,641, to meet an estimated expenditure of £603,643, so that the estimated surplus at the end of the coming financial year is £99,998.

“In the estimated expenditure is included the estimate for Public Works, amounting to £98,383. This amount is considerably in excess of the sum usually voted for Public Works ; but having regard to the fact that many works of great utility have been necessarily deferred of late years, I have felt justified in devoting a larger amount than usual to carrying out some of the more pressing of these works, to which, from their permanent nature, I consider the expenditure of a portion of the money derived from the sale of the railway peculiarly applicable. This balance is no larger than under the present circumstances I think ought to be kept in hand, especially bearing in mind the fact that in the financial year 1892-93 there will have to be provided from General Revenue the sum of £54,900 to complete the payment of £59,800 borrowed in aid of the General Revenue under Law 37 of 1887,

and which sum under the provisions of that law must be provided for out of General Revenue.

“The Law for carrying out the Underground Drainage of Kingston has been submitted to an engineering expert in England, whose report will be laid before you. Some amendments in the Law have been suggested by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, but as I do not feel justified in proceeding with the underground drainage until I am satisfied that proper arrangements have been made for securing a constant and adequate supply of water, I do not propose to deal with the matter during the present session. Measures for obtaining such a supply are engaging my earnest attention.

“Great inconvenience having been felt by the mercantile community from the change in the hour of the departure of the homeward mail from 4 P.M. to 12 noon, representations have been made on the subject with the result that the Royal Mail Company have consented to change the hour from noon to 2 P.M., beginning with the mail steamer leaving to-day.

“The following Bills will be laid before you :—

“A Bill relating to the Volunteer Militia.

“The Pensions Regulation Law, 1891.

“A Law to amend a Law to prevent trespasses on or the making of drawings of certain Military and Naval Forts and Positions.

“The Weights and Measures Law, 1890, Amendment Law, 1891.

“The Resident Magistrates Law, 1887, Amendment Law, 1891.

“The Parochial Boards Law, 1885, Further Amendment Law, 1891.

- “ The St. Thomas and Portland Bridges Loan Law, 1881, Amendment Law, 1891.
- “ The Patent Law Amendment Act, 1857, Amendment Law, 1891.
- “ The Witnesses Expenses Law, 1891.
- “ A Law to authorise the reduction of the Interest on Advances to Parishes.
- “ The Industrial Schools and Reformatories Law, 1881, Amendment Law, 1891.
- “ The Immigration Protection and Regulation Law, 1879, Amendment Law, 1891.
- “ The Immigration Financial Law, 1891.
- “ A Law to bring the Accounting Periods of various Persons and Bodies into conformity with that adopted by the Government.
- “ A Law to amend a Law in aid of the Parochial Roads (Law 17 of 1890).
- “ In addition to the Bills named in the above list, I propose to lay before the Council a Bill on Secondary Education, which, however, I do not propose to carry in the present session beyond its first reading.

“ I commend these Bills to your most careful consideration, with the earnest prayer that the result of your deliberations may be to increase the happiness and well-being of all classes of the people of Jamaica.”

This opening address was received with great satisfaction.

I may mention that the Constitution of Jamaica was not always the same as it is now. They formerly had, besides a Legislative Council, a Legislative Assembly. These two Chambers represented the

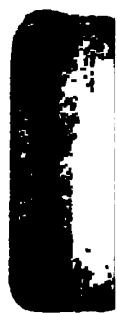
Lords and Commons, but in the time of Governor Eyre the Legislative Assembly became so troublesome that it was abolished, and the present Council embodies in itself all the legislative powers of the island.

In the evening a full-dress banquet was given at King's House to the members of the Legislative Council and other official personages and foreign visitors. A military band was in attendance, and every guest at table was in uniform, which added much brilliancy to its aspect.

The ladies dined by themselves in the Prince's apartments, which commanded a full view of the proceedings.

The gardens were most artistically illuminated, the effect being greatly enhanced by the tropical surroundings which formed the framework of the various devices.

THE END.



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